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THE

HISTORY OF IRELAND

FROM THE

INVASION UNDER HENRY II.

TO THE

UNION WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

BY

BY BRANCH PLOVER, ESQ.

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VOL. II.

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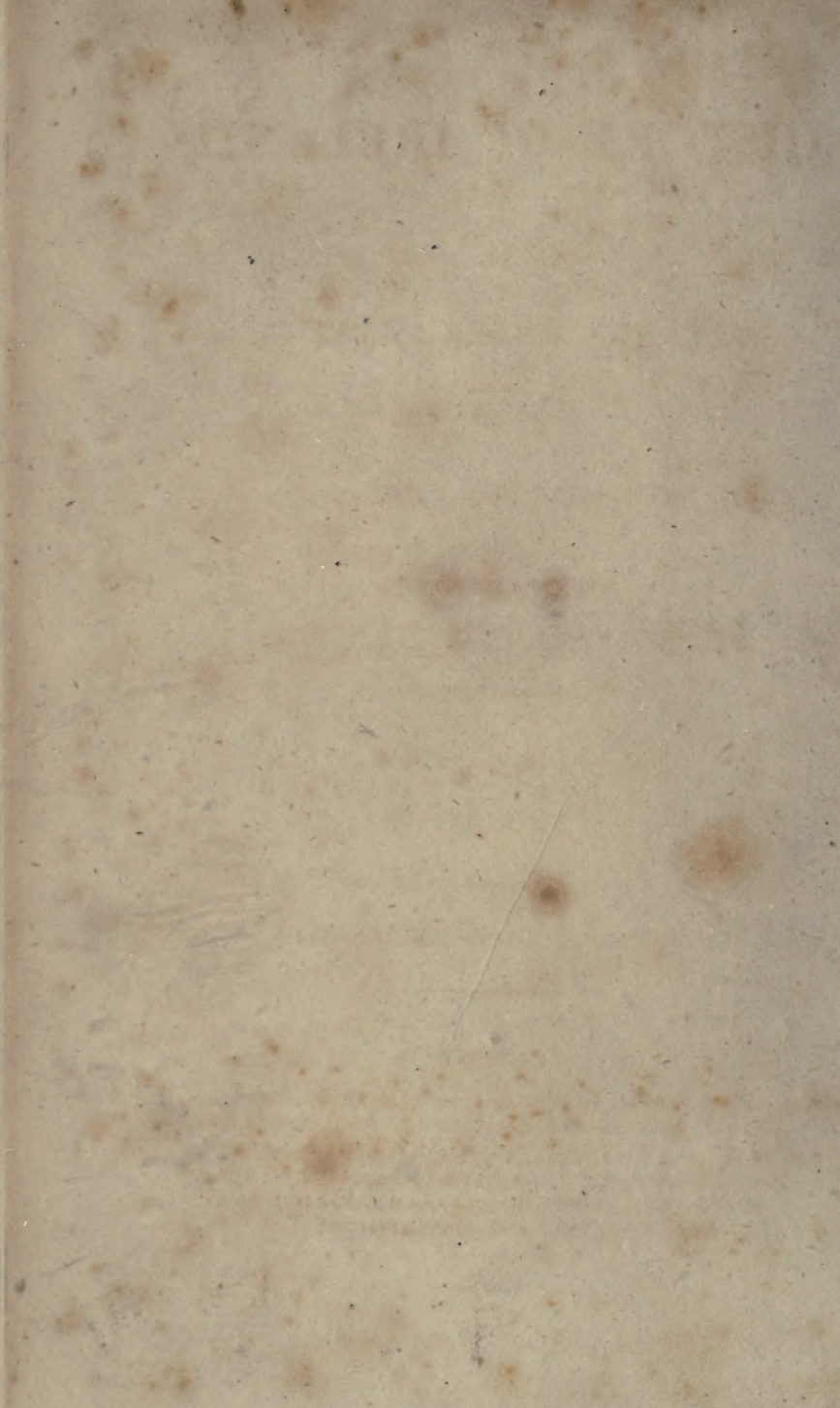
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THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND,

FROM ITS

INVASION UNDER HENRY II.

TO ITS

UNION WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

BY FRANCIS PLOWDEN, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

“*Incorrupta fides nudaque veritas.*”——HOR.

LONDON:

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MR. MARTIN KEENE, COLLEGE-GREEN, DUBLIN.

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HISTORY OF IRELAND.

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revolutionary measure, whether of abdication, invitation, or expulsion, but by force of arms. Hence William's title arose by right of conquest. This revolution, such as it was, opens to our view a new scene of Irish politics. Whatever civil advantages were gained or established by it in England, vainly do the Irish look up to it as the commencement or improvement of their constitutional liberty. Then, more than ever, was Ireland treated as a conquered country, its independence violated, its national consequence and dignity debased. It appears to have been the systematic policy of the British cabinet of that day, not only to trample on the rights of individuals, through their immediate governors, but to extinguish the very idea of an independent legislature in Ireland*.

* Mr. Burke, viewing this situation of his country as a statesman and a philosopher, has left a masterly portrait of it. (Letter to Sir Her. Lang. p. 44.) "By the total reduction of the kingdom of Ireland in 1691, the ruin of the native Irish, and in a great measure too of the first races of the English, was completely accomplished. The new interest was settled with as solid a stability as any thing in human affairs can look for. All the penal laws of that unparalleled code of oppression, which were made after the last event, were manifestly the effects of national hatred and scorn towards a conquered people, whom the victors delighted to trample upon, and were not at all afraid to provoke. They were not the effects of their fears, but of their security. They, who carried on this system looked to the irresistible force of Great Britain for their support in their acts of power. They were quite certain, that no complaints of the natives would be heard on this side of the water with any other sentiments than those of contempt and indignation. Their cries served only to augment their torture. Machines, which could answer their purposes so well must be of an excellent con-

Although the articles of Limerick had immediately received the sanction of the great seal of England, they were soon infringed in the face of the Irish nation. Two months had not elapsed, when, according to the testimony of Harris *, the avowed encomiast of William, the lords justices and General Ginckle endeavoured to render the first of those articles of as little force as possible. † “The justices of the peace, sheriffs, and other magistrates, presuming on their power in the country, did in an illegal manner dispossess several of their majesties’ subjects not only of

1692.

Articles of
Limerick
not ob-
served.

trivance. Indeed at that time in England the double name of the complainants, Irish and Papists, (it would be hard to say singly which was the most odious) shut up the hearts of every one against them. Whilst that temper prevailed in all its force to a time within our memory, every measure was pleasing and popular, just in proportion, as it tended to harass and ruin a set of people, who were looked upon to be enemies to God and man; and indeed as a race of bigotted savages, who were a disgrace to human nature itself.”

* Harris’s *Life of King William*, p. 357.

† Ibid. 350. “Capel, Lord Justice, in 1693, proceeded as far as it was in his power to infringe the articles of Limerick.” It appears also from a letter of the Lords Justices of the 19th of November, 1691, “that their lordships had received complaints from all parts of Ireland, of the ill-treatment of the Irish, who had submitted, had their majesties protection, or were included in articles: and that they were so extremely terrified with apprehensions of the continuance of that usage, that some thousands of them, who had quitted the Irish army, and went home with a resolution not to go to France, were then come back again, and pressed earnestly to go thither, rather than stay in Ireland, where contrary to the public faith as well as law and justice, they were robbed of their substance and abused in their persons.”

1692.



their goods and chattels, but of their lands and tenements, to the great disturbance of the peace of the kingdom, subversion of the law, and reproach of their majesties' government."

William
not natur-
ally intoler-
ant

There is no question, but that King William was infinitely more tolerant in his principles and disposition than the English and Irish protestants, who urged him to excesses of rigor and persecution against the conquered Irish. He abhorred the system; but was forced to yield. Although he had been most anxious to secure the sovereignty of the British empire by the final subjugation of Ireland, yet he was too much of the warrior, not to esteem those most whom he found it the most difficult to subdue. He did not, after having reduced Ireland by force of his own arms, consider it merely a conquest for the purposes of parliamentary appropriation. His Majesty's mind had not yet been accustomed to the restrictions, which the English constitution threw around the will of the sovereign. The Tories flattered him more than the Whigs, and he had thrown himself into the arms of the former.

Differences
between
William
and his
English
parliament.

The relative feelings of William and his English parliament towards each other, and towards Ireland are more illustrated by the address presented to the King by the English House of Commons, and his Majesty's unsatisfactory answer to it, than by a volume of detail. Sir Francis Brewster, and some other persons had been induced to give very strong evidence before the English House of Commons of the various abuses then practised by the government of

Ireland, upon which an address of the Commons to the throne was voted *.

1692.

* This evidence is to be seen in the journals of the English House of Commons for 1692, p. 826 to 833. The following is the address, with the King's answer.

“ We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons in parliament assembled, having taken into our serious consideration the state of your Majesty's kingdom of Ireland, find ourselves obliged by our duty to your Majesty, with all faithfulness and zeal to your service, to lay before your Majesty the great abuses and mismanagement of the affairs of that kingdom.

“ By exposing your protestant subjects to the misery of free quarters, and the licentiousness of the soldiers to the great oppression of the people ; which we conceive hath been occasioned chiefly by the want of that pay, which we did hope we had fully provided for.

“ By recruiting your Majesty's troops with Irish papists, and such persons, who were in open rebellion against you, to the great endangering and discouraging of your Majesty's good and loyal protestant subjects in that kingdom.

“ By granting protections to the Irish papists, whereby protestants are hindered from their legal remedies, and the course of law stopt.

“ By reversing outlawries for high treason against several rebels in that kingdom, not within the articles of Limerick, to the great discontent of your protestant subjects there.

“ By letting the forfeited estates at under rates, to the prejudice of your Majesty's revenue.

“ By the great embezzlement of your Majesty's stores, in the towns and garrisons of that kingdom, left by the late King James.

“ And by the great embezzlements, which have been made in the forfeited estates and goods, which might have been employed for the safety and better preservation of your Majesty's kingdom. We crave leave to represent to your Majesty, that the addition to the articles of Limerick, after the same were finally agreed to and

1692.

Negotiation
of the ar-
ticles of
Limerick.

Few parts of the history of Ireland have been more distorted by misrepresentation, than the articles of Limerick and Galway. Sir Richard Cox, the courtly historian of Ireland, bore a prominent part in the

signed, and the town thereupon surrendered, hath been a very great encouragement to the Irish papists, and a weakening to the English interest there.

“ Having thus, most gracious sovereign, out of our affectionate zeal to your Majesty’s service, with all humble submission to your great wisdom, laid before you these abuses and mismanagements in your kingdom of Ireland, we most humbly beseech your Majesty for redress thereof.

“ That the soldiers may be paid their arrears, and the country what is due to them for quarters ; and that no Irish papist may serve in your army there.

“ And forasmuch as the reducing of Ireland hath been of great expense to this kingdom, we do also humbly beseech your Majesty, that (according to the assurance your Majesty has been pleased to give us) no grant may be made of the forfeited estates in Ireland, till there be an opportunity of settling that matter in parliament, in such manner, as shall be thought most expedient.

“ That the true account of the escheats, and forfeited estates both real and personal, and stores left by the late King James, may be laid before the Commons in parliament, to the end that the said escheats, forfeitures, and stores, and the embezzlements thereof, may be enquired into.

“ That no outlawries of any rebels in Ireland may be reversed, or pardons granted to them, but by the advice of your parliament ; and that no protection may be granted to any Irish papist to stop the course of justice.

“ And as to the additional article, which opens so wide a passage to the Irish papists, to come and repossess themselves of the estates, which they had forfeited by their rebellion ; we most humbly beseech your Majesty, that the articles of Limerick, with

secret manœuvring of this memorable transaction*. William and his allies were engaged in a war in Flanders against the French monarch. It was not possible, while the King's troops were diverted by the war in Ireland, that his Majesty should so successfully proceed in Flanders, as was wished by his friends. The King, therefore, hoping to put a speedy end to the Irish war, sent to the lords justices instructions for a declaration, assuring the Irish of much more favourable and extensive conditions than they afterwards obtained by the articles of Limerick. His Majesty's instructions had been reduced into a proclamation, which was afterwards stiled the

1692.

the said addition, may be laid before your Commons in parliament, that the manner of obtaining the same may be inquired into ; to the end it may appear by what means the said articles were so engaged ; and to what value the estates thereby obtained do amount.

“ Thus may it please your Majesty, we your most dutiful and loyal subjects do lay these matters in all humility before you : and as your Majesty has been pleased to give us such gracious assurances of your readiness to comply with us, in any thing, that may tend to the peace and security of this kingdom, we doubt not of your Majesty's like grace and favour to that of Ireland ; in the safety and preservation whereof, this your Majesty's kingdom is so much concerned.”

To which address his Majesty returned this prudent answer :

“ Gentlemen,

“ I shall always have great consideration of what comes from the House of Commons ; and I shall take great care that what is amiss shall be remedied.”

* Sir James Ware's *Writers of Ireland*, by Harris. Dub. Ed. 1762, p. 214.

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secret proclamation ; because, though printed, it never was published. The Lords Justices, finding Lime-rick reduced to a capitulation, smothered the proclamation, of which they thought there would then be no need, and went in haste to the English camp, that they might hold the Irish to as hard terms as the King's affairs would admit of. This they did effectually, and put an end to a war, which had nearly destroyed the kingdom. Soon after, a party sprang up, that loudly exclaimed against these articles. The most interested and intriguing of that party quarrelled with the articles for no other reason, but because they were disappointed in their expectations of raising great fortunes out of the forfeitures by their interest or their money. These easily drew in the greater part of the protestants, ignorant of the true motives, which induced the government to grant the articles, and full of resentment against the catholics, to engage on the popular side of the question. They thought no articles should be made with the Irish, but what would expose them to the severest events of war ; and, therefore, when they understood, that the catholics in the Irish quarters were to enjoy their estates, and be received as subjects, with some privileges as to oaths and religion, they refrained not from censuring the Lords Justices, and the General, as if the King and kingdom had been betrayed ; and insisted, that the articles ought not to be observed ; and that it was high treason even to capitulate with the King. On the other hand, the more moderate men thought it for his Majesty's honour, both abroad and at home,

that the articles should be observed strictly; and indeed the government always received instructions from the King to adhere strictly to them, *for his word and honour were engaged, which he never would forfeit.* A different proceeding might have disobliged many of his allies. And even if his honour had not been concerned, it was thought sound policy to give the Irish the full benefit of their articles, at least during the war. For the French soon discovered their error in having neglected Ireland so much, when so considerable a part of the natives was in arms to assist them; and therefore projected a new invasion every year, and, without doubt, would have been delighted to see the Irish exasperated by so gross a deceit of the government, as a breach of the articles would have been.

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War was declared between the opposite parties from the pulpit. The Bishop of Meath was so vehement, that the very next Sunday, after the lords justices returned from the camp, preaching before the government at Christchurch, he argued, that the peace ought not to be observed with a people so perfidious; that, they kept neither articles nor oaths longer than was for their interest, and that therefore, these articles, which were intended for a security, would prove a snare, and would only enable the rebels to renew their insurrection. To obviate this doctrine, the Bishop of Kildare mounted the pulpit the following Sunday, and shewed the obligation of keeping public faith, and withal spoke more favourably of the catholics than most protestants thought they deserved. Though

The articles
contested
from the
pulpit.

1692.

it were believed, that the first bishop intended not the direct breach of faith, but to have so strict a hand kept over the catholics, as might disable them from rebelling again: and though the latter bishop were well known to have no partiality to the catholics, nor to intend more, than to vindicate the government, both in making and observing the articles; yet both were highly censured by the different parties: and the Bishop of Meath's behaviour was so displeasing to the King, that he was discharged from the council, and the Bishop of Kildare, for his moderation, put in his place. The contest of the two bishops was moderated by the ingenious interference of Dean Synge, who preached from the same pulpit, where the difference had been first propagated, on these words, *Keep peace with all men, if it be possible*; asserting, that the catholics were not to be trusted, but the articles were to be performed; that they deserved no favour, yet they were entitled to justice, even for the sake of conscience and honour.

Sir Richard Cox's conduct in reference to the articles of Limerick.

Sir Richard Cox was, through the whole affair, in the secret of government; and although he had, upon his own authority, suppressed the first and more favourable articles, yet he too well knew the feelings of his sovereign to attempt to suppress or wave the second, or less favourable articles, which were known to and approved of by William. Sir Richard Cox's ambition was to attain the great seal of Ireland, to which he had no other prospect of arriving but by the personal favour of his sovereign. With this view he curbed his own disposition, which

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was decidedly hostile to any concession to the catholics, and upon all open occasions was, during the life of William, a professed supporter of the articles of Limerick*. Being thoroughly sensible that the concessions made by the open articles of Limerick fell very short of those contained in the secret proclamation, Sir Richard Cox, in proportion as he valued himself for having procured terms so much less disadvantageous to England than those which William, by the advice of his council, had consented to grant, was anxious to suppress from the knowledge of the public the loss which the Irish had suffered by his manœuvre, lest disappointment and despair might throw them again into resistance, and so deprive the King of the advantages he proposed to himself by transporting his army to Flanders. The whole mass of the printed proclamations, containing the more favourable articles, which were on the eve of being published and circulated, was cautiously destroyed. The particulars of these suppressed articles have not reached posterity. There are, however, accounts of the proposals made in the preceding month of July to the Irish shortly before the decisive battle of Aghrim; which, if not precisely the same as were comprised in the suppressed proclamation, cannot be supposed, in

* "In the case of the Galway-men he made so eloquent a speech, insisting so strongly on the heinousness of breaking public faith, on the ingratitude it would carry with it to their great deliverer, as well as to the good General, who had granted those conditions, that he brought the rest of the commissioners to his opinion, and saved the estates of the claimants." Har. ubi supra.

1692. the short space of three months, to have been much altered. That battle was fought on the 12th of July, and the articles of Limerick were signed on the 3d of the ensuing October.

William
had offered
more favor-
able terms
to the Irish.

William was touched with the fate of a gallant nation, that had made itself a victim to French promises, and had been insidiously encouraged to resistance by France, for the purpose of advancing the French conquests in the Netherlands by means of a diversion, which employed 40,000 of the best troops of the grand alliance of Augsburgh. He was naturally anxious to find himself at the head of the confederate army with so strong a reinforcement. In this anxiety he offered to Tyrconnel the following terms for the Irish catholics: 1. The free exercise of their religion. 2. Half the churches of the kingdom. 3. Half the employments civil and military, if they pleased. 4. The moiety of their ancient properties. These proposals, though they were to have been sanctioned by an English act of parliament, were rejected with universal contempt*.

* See the before-mentioned letter to Dean Swift from Sir Charles Wogan, a nephew of the Duke of Tyrconnel, to whom the proposals were made. He was a man of information and considerable talent: was bred to arms, and followed the fortunes of his sovereign into exile. He was well received at most of the courts of Europe, and from the correspondence between him and Dean Swift, he appears to have been holden in respect and esteem by the Dean. The offer of these concessions by William to the Irish catholics affords a volume of observation and instruction upon the important question of catholic emancipation; which has been repeatedly brought before the parliament of the united kingdom,

Of such slight importance in the eyes of the English were the articles of Limerick, (such even as they

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Effects of
the revolution
on the
Irish.

and rejected by great majorities, upon the pretence of its being a violation of the coronation oath, an extinction of the established religion, and an infraction of the constitution. The reader will bear in remembrance, that William, on the 13th of February, 1689, took the same coronation oath with his present Majesty: that it then bore the same meaning, and induced the same obligations as at present. That the conscience of King William was then in the hands of Serjeant Maynard, Sir Anthony Keck, and Sir William Rawlinson: and his cabinet composed of persons, to whose constitutional spirit and experience posterity has ever since looked up with veneration. That William himself, who came over to preserve the liberties of church and state, and restore the constitution to its purity, was little likely (so soon at least) to counteract the ends for which he had been placed on the British throne. Yet he was advised, and as far as depended on him, conceded to the Irish infinitely more than has ever been asked by the petitioners for emancipation. Not only was he ready to grant the free exercise of their religion, but half the churches of Ireland. The petitioners ask for no particle of the emoluments of the establishment. William offered half the employments civil and military: the petitioners ask, that his Majesty may not be restrained from appointing or calling into employment such persons, whose signal merits may be conducive to the honour and welfare of their king and country. Eventually one appointment might not be made in half a century. The petitioners for emancipation neither ask nor expect to be restored to any of the inheritances of their ancestors; William proposed and agreed to give them a moiety of their ancient properties.

The concession and confirmation of these boons to the Irish, so far exceeding the extent of the petition for emancipation, proceeded from the King, who must be presumed thoroughly advised by his great Whig counsellors, who at that time rather coerced, than directed his Majesty's conduct, particularly in all that regarded Ireland. It would be a sorry compliment, either to our

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ultimately were), that both government and parliament seemed to assume merit for the undisguised infraction of them. Reduced, as they had been, below the original intent and actual proposal of William to the Irish, still were they boasted of by the friends of James, as the most advantageous terms of capitulation recorded in the annals of war; and for that very reason they were condemned by the Irish

great deliverer, or to the great political characters, who brought about and settled the revolution to assume, that these proposals were made with a direct view of ensnaring the Irish into terms, with a reserved intention of violating them after they had been once granted. The Irish, however, mistrusted and rejected them. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*. Sir Charles Wogan, in the above-mentioned letter, thus speaks to Dean Swift of the feelings of his exiled countrymen, upon this rejection, at the distance of thirty years from the transaction, when those young ardent minds, that had borne a part in that unfortunate warfare in Ireland, had attained the maturity and experience of threescore years: "Yet the exiles, in the midst of their hard usage abroad, could not be brought to repent of their obstinacy. Whenever I pressed them upon the matter, their answer was generally to this purpose: *If England can break her public faith in regard of the wretched articles of Limerick, by keeping up a perpetual terror and persecution over that parcel of miserable, unarmed peasantry and dastard gentry we have left at home, without any other apology or pretence for it, but her wanton fears and jealousies: What could have been expected by the men of true vigour and spirit, if they had remained in their country, but a cruel war under greater disadvantages, or such an universal massacre as our fathers have often been threatened with by the confederate rebels of Great Britain? Ad quod non fuit responsum.* Yet their liberty and glory is but the price of their blood; and even at that expense, they have only purchased a more honourable *haseldama*."

protestants, and some of the more violent Whigs in England, as dishonourable to the arms of William and unjust to his friends in Ireland. In no sense could the revolution of 1688 be termed any thing else as to the Irish but a mere conquest, and a conquest of the harshest nature, inasmuch as it was not followed up by a participation of civil rights and liberties by the conquerors and conquered, but acted upon as a new ground for imposing additional severities upon the former grievances of the vanquished. "It was (as Mr. Burke observed, in defiance of the principles of our revolution) the establishment of the power of the smaller number, at the expense of the civil liberties and properties of the far greater, and at the expense of the civil liberties of the whole."

Upon the circumstances of a great nation's recovering from the agonies of a long and bloody contest, it might have been expected, that some things should have been necessarily attempted by the executive, before the legislative power could be conveniently assembled to ratify and confirm them. But although Ireland, as an independent kingdom, claimed, under William, the same rights, which it had enjoyed under his predecessors, yet the parliament of England, at this time, usurped the absolute right of legislating for Ireland, in as uncontrouled a manner, as if Ireland had no parliament of its own. Thus, in the year 1691, before William had convened an Irish parliament, the English parliament passed an act to alter the laws of Ireland, upon the most essential and fundamental rights of the subject, by excluding the Roman Catho.

1692.
England
usurps the
right of le-
gislating for
Ireland.

1692. } lics, who then composed the decided majority of the nation, from a seat in either house of parliament*. And when a mere protestant parliament had been convened in the year 1692, so little satisfied with it was the parliament of England, that it continued its legislative encroachments, by enacting whatever laws it thought proper for regulating and settling the legal, civil, military, and ecclesiastical departments in Ireland, for checking their commerce and disposing of their property.

Abject state
of the Irish
catholics.

The catholics being thus shut out of parliament, were no longer seen in the field of politics. They were never brought under the consideration of government, but as objects of some additional severity. Their penal code was sharpened. The bulk of the nation had a physical not a political existence. In the higher orders, the progress of the reformation had latterly been much extended. The English, now domiciliated in Ireland, were from plantations, forfeitures, and other causes surprizingly multiplied. The Irish protestants and the resident English, whose grand struggle in the former reigns had been to acquire an ascendancy over the old native catholic interest of the country, now began to consider themselves an independent nation. Although the revolution did not let in the Irish immediately to those civil rights and liberties

Viz. 3 William and Mary, c. ii. *An Act for Abrogating the Oath of Supremacy in Ireland, and appointing other Oaths.* It must also be remarked, that the 11th section of this act contains an exception of persons comprised in the articles of Limerick, which amounts to a legislative recognition of them.

which it imparted or secured to England, yet it enkindled a spirit of freedom, which disposed many of those, who partook of the state to insist upon the constitutional rights of Irishmen; a claim new to an Irish parliament!

1692.

The supporters of the Whig interest in Ireland differed from those who forwarded the revolution in England in principle, in action, and in views. The Irish Whigs of that day were the relicks of the Oliverian party, avowing no other principle than that of retaining monopoly of power in the few over the bulk of the nation, and acting thereon with an arbitrary severity, which riveted the physical power of the country in resistless thralldom. It is important to trace the workings of these Whigs of 1649 upon the Irish nation, and to discriminate between their political conduct towards their country, and that of another protestant party, which has from time to time endeavoured to set up the genuine principles of the English revolution, against the systematic abuse of them by it's protestant opponents in Ireland*. Of the former description were the persons† whom the King appointed the first lords-justices. They ‡ “discovered an arbitrary spirit, and great partiality in the dispensation of

Irish different from English Whigs.

* Out of this ground of difference arises the modern distinction between the true constitutional Whig and Orangeman of Ireland, to which, in the proper time and order, I must draw the attention of my reader.

† They were Lord Viscount Sydney, Sir Charles Porter, and Thomas Coningsby, Esq.

‡ Sommerv. Hist. vol. I. p. 486.

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justice: the trial of crimes was often conducted in a summary way, and without regard to the essential forms of law: evidence was suppressed with the connivance of the judges: the principal transgressors were acquitted, whilst those who acted under their direction and influence suffered the extreme vengeance of the laws. But in no case did the management of the justices appear more iniquitous and oppressive, than in regard to the Irish forfeitures. The most beneficial leases were not only retained for themselves and their friends, but in the competition for estates and farms, the lowest bidders were sometimes preferred, which unavoidably led to the suspicion of secret compensation being made them for flagrant breach of trust. These misdemeanours, and the grievances occasioned by them, produced complaints and disaffections, which were made the ground of specific charges, presented to the legislature in both kingdoms. Enquiries were instituted; important discoveries were made; but the extreme intricacy and tediousness of this business, the private concerns of the parties in England, and the industry of powerful individuals, who were not themselves free from all accession to the guilt alleged, prevented any effectual redress of public abuses, and the punishment of state delinquents."

Lord Sydney
convenes a
parliament.

Lord Sydney, having been created lord-lieutenant, immediately issued writs and convened a parliament; the primary object of which was to raise supplies to discharge the debts contracted during the war. There had been no parliament in Ireland, (except that which sat under James) for the last twenty-six years: and

1692.¹

although the parliament of England had undertaken to legislate for Ireland on the most important matters of state, yet had it not proceeded to the extent of raising money directly upon the people of Ireland. The Irish parliament could not be insensible of the encroachments made on their independence; they felt their consequence, and manifested by their conduct their resentment against the measures of government. The commons consented to grant a sum not exceeding 70,000*l.* pleading the inability of the people from the calamities of the late wars to encrease the grant. They considered it to be their indisputable right to determine in the first instance both the sum and the manner of raising every supply granted to the crown. In violation of this privilege, two money-bills, which had not originated with them, had been transmitted from England, and laid before the house of commons. To resent this encroachment upon their privileges, they rejected one of them, and from the extreme urgency of the case alone consented to pass the other; but not without having entered very pointed resolutions upon their journals in support of their rights*.

His excellency was highly enraged at these resolutions, and in his speech upon proroguing the parliament severely reprimanded them for having, in contravention of the design of their meeting, undutifully and ungratefully invaded their Majesties prero-

Lord Sydney reprimands and prorogues the parliament.

* II Journ. 28. 21st of October, 1692. These resolutions are to be seen in my Hist. Review, vol. I. p. 200.

1693.



gative. The commons requested permission to send commissioners to England, in order to lay a full and impartial statement of their conduct before their Majesties; when they were tauntingly assured by the lord-lieutenant, that *they might go to England to beg their Majesties' pardon for their seditious and riotous assemblies.* The lord-lieutenant, in justification of his conduct, procured the opinion of the judges against the right which the commons claimed of originating money-bills in their house. This unexpected and ungracious prorogation created general discontent: several bills of importance remained to be perfected, and several grievances to be redressed. Sydney became unpopular; and government found it prudent to recall him.

Sydney recalled.
Changes in the government, and a new parliament convened.

Upon the removal of Lord Sydney, the government was vested in three justices, Lord Capel, Sir Cyril Wyche, and Mr. Duncombe. Difference of principle disunited their government, which shortly after was concentrated in Lord Capel, as lord-deputy. He best knew the disposition and wishes of the English cabinet, and warmly espoused the interest of the English settlers, and as eagerly opposed the claims of the Irish under the articles of Limerick. Sir Cyril Wyche and Mr. Duncombe, regardless of court-favour, sought impartially to give full effect to the articles of Limerick, upon which the court-party and the protestants in general looked with a jealous eye, as prejudicial to their interest. The inflexibility of Wyche and Duncombe soon worked their removal: and the accommodating zeal of Capel enabled him to

displace all those, who thwarted his designs. Several changes were made in the administration, and a new parliament was convened.

1695.

The business of this session was at first undisturbed, and the supplies, which had been required, were quietly granted. Several penal statutes were enacted, without any opposition, against the Catholics*; some of which were in direct contravention to the articles of Limerick. Yet a law was made in this parliament for the confirmation of these very articles†; but which in fact was an abridgment, rather than a confirmation of them in several instances‡. Notwithstanding the tide of courtly prejudice against the tend-

New session of parliament, in which Sir Charles Porter was conspicuous for his probity.

* Such were, An Act to restrain foreign Education, 7 William and Mary, c. iv. An Act for the better securing the Government, by disarming Papists, 7 William and Mary, c. v. An Act for banishing all Papists exercising any Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, and all Regulars of the Popish Clergy out of the Kingdom, 9 William III. c. i. An Act to prevent Protestants intermarrying with Papists, 9 William, c. iii. An Act to prevent Papists being Solicitors, 10 William, c. xiii.

† An Act for the Confirmation of Articles, made at the Surrender of the City of Limerick, 9 William III. c. ii.

‡ Whilst this bill was pending, a petition was presented by Mr. Cahusac and some few, on behalf of themselves and others comprised in the articles of Limerick, setting forth, that in the bill there were several clauses, that would frustrate the petitioners of the benefit of the same: and, if passed into a law, would turn to the ruin of some, and the prejudice of all persons entitled to the benefit of the said articles, and praying to be heard by counsel to the said matters: which having been presented and read, it was unanimously resolved, that the said petition should be rejected, 11 Journ. Com. p. 194.

1695.

ency and observance of these articles, Sir Charles Porter, the chancellor, nobly dared to stand up in support of them. This conduct of the chancellor brought upon him the whole vengeance of the castle. The lord-deputy is reported, with the assistance of his friends and creatures, to have procured a charge to be fabricated against him, accusing him of designs hostile to government. In support of the accusation, a motion was made in the House of Commons, but on being heard in his own justification, he was most honourably acquitted.

Inconsistent conduct of Government towards Ireland.

However strenuous in the cause of freedom our ancestors may have been at the revolution, the unbiassed mind questions the purity of their patriotism, when it contemplates the English parliament and government opposing that very liberty in Ireland, which they so warmly espoused in England. The fermentation of the two kingdoms became alarming. It was no longer a contest between a conqueror and an oppressed people reclaiming their natural, civil, or religious rights. The bulk of the nation was so dispirited and reduced under their sufferings, that their feeble moans were scarcely heard on their own shores, much less across St. George's Channel: they existed only as the passive objects of persecution. The conflict was with that very protestant ascendancy in Ireland, which it had been the primary policy of the English cabinet for the last century to establish, and which now only had been effectually accomplished. It was impossible that civil liberty should make the progress it did in England, and that Ireland should be more

than insensible of its blessings. The Irish legislature was called upon to surrender and renounce those very rights, which the English parliament had so gloriously asserted. Mr. Molyneux, one of the members for the university of Dublin, was the most forward in the cause of Irish patriotism. In 1698, he published his famous book, intituled *The Cause of Ireland's being bound by Acts of Parliament in England stated*, which greatly encreased his reputation, influence, and popularity, within and without the parliament of Ireland.

1698.

This book was written in a strain of independent discussion and spirited assertion, to which Ireland had hitherto been a stranger. The author considered how Ireland originally became annexed to the crown of England; how far this connection was founded in conquest; what were the true and lawful rights of the conquerors over the conquered; and whether those rights, whatever they might be, extended to posterity indefinitely; particularly, what concessions had been made to Ireland; and what were the opinions of the learned, who had handled the subject. He closed with strong inferences in support of the perfect and reciprocal independence of each kingdom.

General substance of Mr. Molyneux's book.

* The English House of Commons took up the gauntlet with a high hand: a committee was appointed to examine Mr. Molyneux's book, and to report such passages as they should find denying the authority of the parliament of England, and also what proceed-

Conduct of the English parliament upon Molyneux's book.

* Speech of the Earl of Clare, p. 23.

1698.



ings had taken place in Ireland, that might have occasioned the said pamphlet. On the 22d of June, 1698, the committee reported the obnoxious passages, and stated, that on enquiry into the proceedings in Ireland, which might have occasioned the pamphlet, they found in a bill transmitted under the great seal of Ireland, during the late parliament there, intituled, “ A bill for the better security of her Majesty’s person and government,” that the whole of an act passed in England for abrogating the oath of supremacy in Ireland, and appointing other oaths, had been re-enacted with some alterations; and that in the same bill, the crown of Ireland was stiled the imperial crown of Ireland. Upon this report, the House resolved, *nemine contradicente*, “ that the book published by Mr. Molyneux was of dangerous tendency to the crown and people of England, by denying the authority of the King and parliament of England to bind the kingdom and people of Ireland, and the subordination and dependance that Ireland had and ought to have upon England as being united and annexed to the imperial crown of England.” They resolved also, “ that the bill lately transmitted from Ireland, whereby an act of parliament made in England expressly to bind Ireland is pretended to be re-enacted, had given occasion and encouragement to forming and publishing the dangerous positions contained in the said book.” The house in a body presented an address to the King, enlarging in terms of great indignation on the book and its pernicious assertions, and on the dangerous tendency of the proceedings of the Irish parliament; beseech-

ing his Majesty "to exert his royal prudence to prevent their being drawn into example, and to take all necessary care, that the laws, which directed and restrained the parliament of Ireland in their actings, should not be evaded;" and concluding with an assurance of their ready concurrence and assistance in a parliamentary way, to preserve and maintain the dependance and subordination of Ireland to the Imperial crown of England. The King answered, "that he would take care, that what was complained of should be prevented and redressed as the Commons desired," Thus were the parliaments of the two countries at issue.

1698.

It has been the fate of Ireland to experience more harshness from the English government, than any other part of the British empire: on none has the hand of the conqueror pressed so heavily. The inflexible adherence of the Irish to their old religion has been generally, not without some reason, assigned as the cause of it. Yet singular it is, that under a sovereign, who was called over by the nation as the assertor and protector of their rights and liberties, and under the first Irish parliament, which consisted purely of protestant members, the absolute paramount sovereignty of England was more loftily claimed and sternly exerted, than at any subsequent period. The laws, by which the English legislature prohibited the exportation of wool and woollen manufactures from Ireland, upon pain of confiscation, imprisonment, and transportation, and by which no acquittal in that kingdom of any offence against these statutes was allowed

Overbearing conduct of the English parliament towards Ireland.

1698.

to be pleaded in bar of any indictment upon them within the kingdom of England, were considered as grievous usurpations upon the independent constitutional * rights of Ireland. The English parliament's interference also with the Irish forfeitures created a new and most inveterate ground of jealousy and rancour between the two legislatures.

William
thwarted
by his Eng-
lish parlia-
ment.

Although William had been called to the British throne for the avowed purpose of protecting the civil rights and liberties of the nation, yet no monarch was ever more thwarted by his parliament in his views and inclinations towards his subjects. It might be unfair to charge him with the odium of several public measures, which the violence of party compelled him to yield to. The strong measure of withholding the royal assent from bills, that had passed the two Houses of Parliament, could not be expected from William, who so peculiarly held his crown by parliamentary tenure. On no occasion were his feelings so severely wounded by the imperious ascendancy of his English parliament, as on passing the act for resuming the forfeited estates in Ireland. William had exercised his discretion in making grants of the forfeited lands in Ireland to several, who had either deserved well of their country

* It evidently contradicts the first principles of our constitutional jurisprudence, that a free subject, after having been tried upon a penal statute in his own country, and acquitted, should be dragged to a foreign land, to undergo a second trial for the same offence, without the advantage of a jury of his countrymen and peers, and probably without witnesses for his defence, or resources for his support.

or had acquired interest at court. The commons of England were jealous of the King's favours, and charged his Majesty with the breach of promise, that he would not grant away any of those lands, but permit them to be sold for the use of the public, in order to clear the heavy expenses of the late war. They accordingly resolved to set aside the seventy-six grants he had made. 1698.

By act of the English parliament*, a commission of seven persons was instituted to enquire into the value of the forfeited estates, which had been disposed of, and into the reasons upon which they had been alienated from the public. There certainly was some personal resentment against the King, in instituting this scrutiny into the grounds of the royal grants. The interference of the English parliament with these concerns of Ireland was unwarrantable, whilst Ireland had an independent parliament of it's own. The English parliament assuming a general tutelary power

Parliamentary commission for enquiring into the value of the forfeited estates.

* 11 and 12 Gul. III. c. 2. An Act for granting an Aid to his Majesty, by sale of the forfeited and other Estates and Interests in Ireland, &c. This was a legislative reprimand to the Sovereign, who had already, by virtue of his prerogative, actually disposed of the whole or the greater part of the forfeitures according to his own discretion in the 76 grants, which were thus violently resumed. The preamble of the act, after treating the conduct of the Irish, in obeying and serving King James, who in person summoned them to their allegiance, as so many acts of treason, concludes in this inference, unjust to the Irish and ungracious to William. "Whereas it is highly reasonable, that the estates of such rebels and traitors should be applied in ease of your Majesty's faithful subjects of this kingdom, to the use of the public,"

1700.



over every part of the British empire, actually resumed these grants, which it considered the King to have made unadvisedly and extravagantly. The majority of the commissioners were strongly in the interest of the parliament, the other three were more pliant to the wishes of the crown*.

Contest between the court and parliamentary interest beneficial to Ireland.

The contest between these parties produced beneficial effects upon Ireland. The eyes of the nation were for the first time opened to abuses, which prescription seemed to have sanctioned in the appropriation of Irish forfeitures: and which the Irish legislature had hitherto been ever either unable or unwilling to resist. In this contest the country party prevailed, and † divers groundless and scandalous aspersions having been cast upon the four commissioners, who were of that party, the commons resolved, that they had acquit-

* The court commissioners were Henry Earl of Drogheda, Sir Richard Leving, and Sir Francis Brewster; the parliament commissioners were Francis Annesly, John Trenchard, James Hamilton, and Henry Langford, esquires: these four alone, signed the report, which is to be seen in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. li. It accounts for the appropriation of 1,060,792 acres. It would be difficult to point out the signal services rendered by Mrs Elizabeth Villiers in the reduction of Ireland, that entitled her to a grant of 95,649 acres, then worth, per annum, 25,995 l. 18s. as will be found by this report. It is to be remarked, that in the seventh article of impeachment against Lord Somers, is contained a charge, that he "did advise, promote, and procure, divers like grants of the late forfeited estates in Ireland, in contempt of the advice of the commons of England." *Parl. Hist.* Vol. III. p. 151.

† *Ibid.* p. 122:

ted themselves in the execution of that commission with understanding, courage, and integrity : and Sir Richard Leving, one of the other three commissioners, was committed to the Tower for having been the author of those reports.

1700.

Ireland, however, on this as on most occasions, was doomed to suffer on both sides ; on one from the extravagant grants of the forfeited lands to court favourites, in lieu of applying them to the discharge of the national incumbrances; on the other, by the usurpation and encroachment of the English parliament upon the independent sovereignty of the parliament of Ireland. The rights of Ireland were wholly lost in the heat of the contest. The court-party, wishing to reserve some at least of the forfeited lands for the disposal of the crown, put the question, which passed in the negative; and on the next day it was resolved, “ that the advising, procuring, and passing the said grants of the forfeited and other estates in Ireland, had been the occasion of contracting great debts upon the nation, and levying heavy taxes upon the people : and that the advising and passing the said grants was highly reflecting on the King’s honour : and that the officers and instruments concerned in the procuring and passing these grants, had highly failed in the performance of their trust and duty.”

Yet Ireland
suffers on
both sides.

The violence done to the King’s feelings, in giving the royal assent to the act of resumption, made an impression on his mind and spirits, from which he never rallied to the hour of his death. His Majesty’s ex-

The Act of
resumption
seriously
affects King
William.

1700.



treme displeasure was expressed in his speech to the commons, when they addressed him in relation to the Irish forfeitures. “* Gentlemen, I was not led by inclination, but thought myself obliged in justice to reward those, who had served well and particularly in the reduction of Ireland, out of the estates forfeited to me by the rebellion there, &c.” Which answer, when the speaker reported it, the commons so highly resented, that they resolved, “that whoever advised it had used his utmost endeavours to create a misunderstanding and jealousy between the King and his people.” The soreness of King William on this occasion is fairly accounted for by the observation, that † “Whereas the late King, who came over here a perfect stranger to our laws, and to our people, regardless of posterity, wherein he was not likely to survive, thought he could no better strengthen a new title, than by purchasing friends at the expense of every thing, which it was in his power to part with‡.”

Tolerant
disposition
of William
towards the
Irish.

The principal, if not the only obstacle, which William had experienced in establishing himself com-

* Vol. III. Parl. Hist. p. 122.

† Swift's Hist. of the Four last Years of Ann, p. 240.

‡ The late Earl of Clare, in his speech so often referred to, (p. 25) speaking of this difference between the two parliaments, tells us, “that the English colony (a term strongly marking that the Irish parliament was not then the representative of the Irish nation) however sore they might have felt under the sharp rebuke of their countrymen, were too sensible of the dangers by which they were surrounded, and their inability to encounter them, to push this political quarrel to a breach with the English parliament.”

1700.

pletely on the throne, was the resistance of the Irish. They were the first and last in the field in support of the house of Stuart : and although several penal and severe laws were passed during his reign against the Roman catholics of Ireland, yet it is but justice to allow, that the royal assent given to them by King William imported no personal disposition in that monarch to harass or persecute his catholic subjects on the score of religion. He is generally panegyriized for his spirit of toleration, on account of the act passed in the first year of his reign *, for easing his protestant dissenting subjects from the penalties of several laws, which then affected them in common with the Roman catholics. This, however congenial with the feelings of King William, who was himself a Calvinist, or presbyterian, had been previously arranged by the party, that brought him over. It appears certain from Harris's admission and the constant claims of the Irish catholics, that William had made them a solemn promise "to procure them such further security from parliament in the particular of religion, as might prevent them from any future disturbance on that account." In this, however, they were miserably disappointed : not perhaps from that monarch's want of sincerity and favourable disposition towards them, but from his inability to resist the violence of the party, to which he

* 1 W. and M. c. 18. An Act for exempting their Majesty's protestant subjects, dissenting from the church of England, from the penalties of certain laws.

1701.



was compelled to yield, to the sore annoyance of his own feelings. Had William been better treated by his English subjects, he would have appeared more amiable in their eyes : for in Holland, where his temper was not ruffled by disappointment and opposition, he was unexceptionably tolerant and universally beloved *.

Death of
William.

The unexpected death of the Duke of Gloucester, the son of the Princess Ann, in his seventeenth year, and the death of the late King James about the same time, gave rise to the act, by which the crown was settled on the house of Hanover, which was the last act passed in this reign. † This and the subsequent act of abjuration secured the protestant

* Two principal causes, however, concurred against his being beloved by the generality of his Irish subjects : the first was the enactment of several penal laws against the Roman Catholics : the second was his ready co-operation with the parliament of England to ruin the woollen trade of Ireland. “ I shall,” said his Majesty to the English commons on the 23 of July, 1698, “ do all that lies in me to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland.”

† This act passed on the 7th of June, 1701. 13 Gul. c. 6. It is intitled, An act for the further security of his Majesty's person and the succession of the crown in the protestant line, and for extinguishing the hopes of the pretended Prince of Wales, and all other pretenders, and their open and secret abettors. This important event made little sensation in Ireland, as the whole body of Roman Catholics, from whom alone any opposition to it could have been expected, were excluded from the parliament and every interference with public affairs.

succession. William's health had for some time been on the decline, but his dissolution was immediately brought on by a fall from his horse, by which his collar-bone was fractured. He died in the fifty-second year of his age, and the thirteenth of his reign. 1701.

CHAPTER II.

The Reign of Ann.

1702.


 Accession
of Ann.

ANN, the daughter of James II., who had been married to the Prince of Denmark, succeeded William. She was the last of the line of Stuart, that filled the British throne. The glory of the British arms under the Duke of Marlborough has thrown a glare over the historical pages of this sovereign's reign, that has almost obliterated the melancholy effects of the spirit of party, which infected it throughout. In the meridian heat of Whiggism and Toryism, nothing was done in moderation : and few of the transactions of that day have reached us in a form unwarped by the prejudices of the narrators. Throughout every part of the British empire, except Ireland, the constitutional rights of the subject ebbed and flowed with the alternate prevalence of one of these parties. The Irish nation was doomed to suffer under every Stuart ; and the conduct of this monarch to them carried the family ingratitude to its acme.


The Queen
open to the
ascendancy
of each
party.

The queen was alternately led down the stream either by the Whigs or the Tories, as their respective parties gained the ascendancy in parliament. The whole of her reign was a state of contest and violence. Parties

in Ireland kept not the same equilibrium as in England: the great mass of the Irish people was forced or frightened out of any political interference with state affairs. The Queen, who held her crown against the claims of her brother by the tenure of protestantism, readily yielded to the cries of both parties to oppress the great body of her catholic subjects of Ireland. 1703.

No crimes, no new offences, no attempts against the government, were laid to their charge: and a new code of unparalleled rigor was imposed upon this suffering people. They had formerly been deprived of their inheritances: they were now prevented from ever again acquiring an inch of land in that kingdom, and subjected to further penalties and disabilities for professing their religion*. Nothing more strongly portrays the abandoned state of the Irish catholics at this period, than that no man in either house of parliament stood up in their favour to oppose the act *for preventing the further growth of Popery*. Act for preventing the growth of popery.

* Without entering into a nauseating detail of this new penal code, suffice it to refer the reader to Mr. Burke's highly-finished picture of it in his admirable Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe, (Let. to Lang. p. 87.) to whom he says: "You abhorred it, as I did, for its vicious perfection. For I must do it justice. It was a complete system full of coherence and consistency: well digested and well composed in all its parts. It was a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance; and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man."

1703.  Some members of the commons affected to clear themselves of responsibility, by resigning their seats to others of a more pliant disposition *. Resignations on this score became so frequent, that the house came to a resolution, "that the excusing of members at their own request from the service of the house, and thereupon issuing out new writs to elect other members to serve in their places, was of dangerous consequence, and tended to the subversion of the constitution of parliament." And it was afterwards resolved unanimously, "that it might be the standing order of the house, that no new writs for electing members of parliament in place of members excusing themselves from the service of the house, do issue at the desire of such members, notwithstanding any former precedents to the contrary."

Force of
anti-cath-
olic preju-
dice.

So violent was the tide of anti-catholic prejudice at this period in Ireland, that the British cabinet feared to oppose the severity they condemned. The Queen was at this time in alliance with the Emperor, and upon the strength of it had interceded with him for certain indulgencies on behalf of his protestant subjects. It appeared therefore an ill-judged moment to encrease the persecution of her own subjects, who were

* These members instead of opposing what they condemned, like Pilate washed their hands before the people, in proof of their innocence. This prevaricating system of debasement has been recently followed on the question of union, by the temporizing or venal secession of members, who wanted assurance to support that measure, which they left to be carried by the votes of their less punctilious substitutes.

not protestants. Her ministers feared the party, which had proposed the measure, in which were many dissenters of great political influence. They resorted in the true spirit of Stuart policy to the following expedient. They superadded to the bill, already surcharged with cruelty, a clause, by which all persons in Ireland were rendered incapable of any employment under the crown, or of being magistrates in any city, who should not, agreeably to the English Test Act, receive the sacrament according to the usage of the church of Ireland. To this it was presumed the dissenters would not have submitted; and so the bill would be lost. The base experiment failed, and the unintended severity fell both upon the protestant dissenters and the catholics: not because they merited punishment, but because a timid and insincere ministry preferred duplicity and deceit to candor and manliness*. The bill, thus loaded with the intemperate rigor, which the British cabinet had heaped upon it for preventing its passing, went through both houses without opposition from a single member in any stage of its progress.

1703.

This bill was conceived by the persons comprised in the articles of Limerick, to be a direct violation of them. Lord Kinsland and colonel Brown, with several other catholic gentlemen, petitioned to be heard by

Complaints
of the vio-
lation of
the articles
of Limerick.

* Burnett says, "it was hoped by those † who got this clause added to the bill, that those in Ireland who promoted it most would now be the less fond of it, when it had such a weight hung to it." History of his own Times, Vol. II. 214.

† This was Lord Godolphin's ministry.

1703.




counsel against it : this was granted. After the arguments of Sir Theobald Butler, Mr. Malone, and Sir Stephen Rice, of counsel for the petitioners, had been heard both at the bar of the House of Lords and Commons, and totally disregarded, the petitioners were tauntingly assured, that if they were deprived of the benefit of the articles of Limerick, it was their own fault, since by conforming to the established religion, they would be entitled to these and many other benefits : that therefore they ought not to blame any but themselves ; that the passing of that bill into a law was needful for the security of the kingdom at that juncture, and in short, that there was nothing in the articles of Limerick which should hinder them from passing it *.

Protestant
dissenters
petition
against the
Sacramental
Test.

The protestant dissenters did not silently submit to be involved in the severity, which substantially and formally was intended by the parliament of Ireland and the cabinet of England to fall upon the catholics exclusively ; they accordingly presented a petition to the commons on the occasion of the above-mentioned clause, which has been usually termed the *Sacramental Test*, complaining, that to their great surprise and disappointment they found a clause inserted in *The Act to prevent the further Growth of Popery*,

* Debates on the Popery Bill, 2 Ann. The arguments of counsel before the commons on the 22d of February, and before the lords on the 28th of February, 1703, are given in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LII. Mr. Arthur Brown, in 1788, one of the representatives for the University of Dublin, published a very warm pamphlet to refute this charge, which he conceived tended to bring odium on the protestant interest,

which had not its rise in that honourable house; 1704.  whereby they were disabled from executing any public trust for the service of her Majesty, the protestant religion, or their country, unless contrary to their consciences they should receive the Lord's Supper according to the rites and usages of the established church *. This parliament was disposed to favour the dissenters, inasmuch as they joined with it in the common cause against the catholics; but its horror of popery outbalanced its tenderness for presbytery, and it prevailed by fair words with the dissenters to withdraw their opposition to the bill, on a specious promise, that the clause obnoxious to them should be repealed in their favour. Cruelty and injustice generally go hand in hand. Not only the clause affecting the dissenters, whose punishment could in no shape check the growth of popery, was left unrepealed, but during this queen's reign it was frequently carried into the most rigorous execution†.

The ingratitude of the Stuart family never ceased to press upon those, who had been the first and the last to fight for them in their distresses. In the front of The Irish persecuted by the Stuarts and their friends.

* Vid. Com. Journ. Vol. II. 451.

† In October, 1707, the commons came to resolutions, that by the Act to prevent the further Growth of Popery, the burgesses of Belfast were obliged to subscribe the declaration and receive the Sacrament according to the usage of the Church of Ireland :- and that the burgessship of the said burgesses of Belfast, who had not subscribed the declaration and received the sacrament pursuant to the said act, was by such neglect become vacant. Vide

1704.

their domestic enemies, the Irish had once more to read the perfidious name of Ormond. The grandson of that Duke, who had sold Dublin to the regicides, who sent all his protestant soldiers to the rebels, who persisted in disobeying his sovereign, till the axe fell on his head, and who never ceased to oppress and persecute his catholic countrymen, was sent over by the queen as lord-lieutenant. Scarcely had he arrived, when the commons*, relying probably on his hereditary propensity to oppress his suffering countrymen, presented to him the bill to prevent the further growth of popery. His Grace was pleased to give them his promise, that he would recommend it in the most effectual manner, and do every thing in his power to prevent the growth of popery†. At the opening of this parliament, the Lords agreed “to an address by way of thanks to her Majesty, for her great care of her subjects of this king-

in the Commons' Journ, vol. II. 564. a petition of the Dowager Countess of Donnegal on behalf of her infant son, upon a contested election for that borough, which gave rise to these resolutions.

* Vide Burnett's History of his own Times, vol. II. 214.

† It exceeds the function of the historian to attempt to fathom the sincerity of the actors in those scenes, which it is his duty to represent. This very Duke of Ormond, who in the year 1704 received the warmest thanks of the Irish parliament for having procured for them this barrier to the protestant religion, as it was then termed, was in the lapse of some few years convicted of high treason, and a reward of 10,000 l. put upon his head, for having deserted his protestant sovereign, and adhered to a Popish pretender to the throne.

1704.

dom, in sending his Grace the Duke of Ormond lieutenant thereof *." The penal laws passed against the Roman catholics of Ireland under this Queen have ever been the theme of discontent with all their writers †. They were passed against the secret wishes and fallacious efforts of the British cabinet, by the procurement of the Irish aristocracy and the unanimous vote of an Irish parliament. The lords in an address to the lord-lieutenant, assured his grace, that it was with great satisfaction they beheld him following the example of his illustrious ancestor, and that they attended his grace to acknowledge and congratulate with him on the good effects of his indefatigable application, as well in framing as in obtaining the return of so many good bills, *but especially The Bill to prevent the further Growth of Popery* ‡. In the same

* " At this time, says Dr. Somerville (vol. II. page 286.) the extreme oppression and misery endured by the Irish cannot be represented in stronger colours, than by the bare detail of facts, which appear in the journals of parliament. Multiplied instances occurred almost every session of the abuse and perversion of power by magistrates and justices of the peace: the frauds of contractors, and the monstrous cruelties inflicted by officers in the recruiting service, which exhibit a complexion of manners little removed from barbarism."

† Thus Curry speaks of The Act to prevent the further Growth of Popery, vol. II. page 234. " A penal statute, through which there runs such a vein of ingenious cruelty, that it seems to be dictated rather by some prætor of Dioclesian, than by a British or Irish nobleman."

‡ Lords' Journ. p. 85. Burnett confirms this statement of the

1704.



year*, they assured her Majesty of their unshaken fidelity to her person, crown, and government: and as they were inseparably annexed to the Imperial crown of England, so were they resolved to oppose all attempts that might be made by Scotland, or any other nation whatsoever, to divide them from it, or defeat the succession in the protestant line, as limited by several acts of parliament†.

The penal laws executed with severity against the catholics.

During the whole reign of Queen Ann the penal laws were executed with unrelenting severity against

Lords. "The Commons, (says he) offered this bill to the Duke of Ormond, pressing him with more than usual vehemence to intercede so effectually, that it might be returned back under the great seal of England. It came over warmly recommended by the Duke of Ormond." *Hist. vol. II. page 214.*

* *Ibid. page 91.*

† The connection of matter, rather than the order of time, points out under what species of influence Ireland has from time to time been oppressed. Although strong symptoms of disaffection or disloyalty appeared in Scotland in the year 1704, to which the address of the Lords referred, yet no history has charged the Irish with having been concerned in them, or even in the subsequent rebellions of 1715 or of 1745. Yet upon the breaking out of that in 1715, the Commons of Ireland, in their address to the crown on that occasion, expressed that "it was with the utmost concern they found, that this country (Ireland) had given birth to James Duke of Ormond, a person, who in despite of his allegiance and the obligations of repeated oaths, had been one of the chief authors and fomenters of that wicked and unnatural rebellion." No terms can be too strong to express the hypocritical and traitorous conduct of this debased nobleman. Although it be difficult to account for the wanton and malicious cruelty, with which he riveted the galling yoke of persecution on

1706.

the catholics. It was the current, though unwise policy of that day, to consider the Roman Catholics as enemies to the crown and government of the realm. The Earl of Pembroke, lord-lieutenant in 1706, recommended to the Irish parliament to provide for the security of the realm against their foreign and domestic enemies, meaning by the latter, the body of Catholics : for he subjoined, that he was commanded to inform them, that her Majesty, considering the number of Papists in Ireland, would be glad of an expedient to strengthen the interest of her Protestant subjects in that kingdom. It was impolitic and dangerous to treat any portion of the population as enemies ; and the surest method of making or keeping them hostile. The resistance of so much provocation to rebellion, as such a principle when acted upon must have produced, is a marked test of the steady loyalty and peaceful demeanour of the Irish Catholics from the revolution to the accession of his present Majesty, under whom they first had the happiness of being considered no longer as enemies.

The parliament of England seemed at this period to

Impolitic
government
of Ireland.

the necks of his unoffending countrymen, by encouraging that ferocious act of Ann, yet he rendered justice to their fidelity by not even attempting to turn the influence of the landlord over a numerous tenantry, or of the governor over the dependants of the castle, to the desperate purpose of shaking their well-known and tried loyalty. An honourable, though forced testimony of the steady allegiance of the Irish nation, in which not a single arm was publicly raised in favour of the Stuarts against the Hanover succession.

1707.

consider the permanent debility of Ireland as their best security for her connection with the British crown, and the Irish parliament to rest the security of the colony upon maintaining a perpetual and impassable barrier against the ancient inhabitants of the country. The executive government was committed nominally to a viceroy, but essentially to lords-justices, selected from the principal state-officers of the country, who were entrusted with the conduct of what was called the king's business, but which, with more propriety, might have been called the business of the lords-justices. The viceroy came to Ireland for a few months only in two years, and returned to England perfectly satisfied with his mission, if he did not leave the concerns of the English government worse than he found them: and the lords-justices in his absence were entrusted implicitly with the means of consolidating an aristocratic influence, which made them the necessary instruments of the English government*.

The Irish
house of
commons
inveterate
against the
Catholics.

In 1707, the commons voted an address of congratulation to her Majesty, on the union of her Majesty's kingdoms of England and Scotland, and on the same day presented an address to the Earl of Pembroke, their lieutenant, in which they thankfully acknowledged the benefits they enjoyed in that happy opportunity of meeting under his excellency's government, to enact such laws as were yet wanting to strengthen the protestant interest of the kingdom. And they assured his excellency, that they were met

* Vid. Lord Clare's Speech on the Union, p. 6.

with firm resolutions to improve that opportunity to the utmost of their power, to disappoint the designs of those, who endeavoured to give advantage to their common enemy, by creating misunderstandings amongst Protestants*.

1709.

When the Earl of Wharton prorogued the parliament on the 30th of March, 1709, he told them, † that he made no question, but that they understood too well the true interest of the protestant religion in that kingdom, not to endeavour to make all such Protestants as easy as they could, who were willing to contribute what they could to defend the whole against the common enemy. It was not the law then passed ‡, nor any law that the wit of man could frame, would secure them against Popery, whilst they continued divided amongst themselves. It being demonstrable, that unless there were a firm friendship and confidence amongst the Protestants of that kingdom, it would be impossible for them either to be happy or to be safe. And he was directed to declare to them, as her Majesty's fixed resolution, that as her Majesty would always maintain and support the church, as by law established, so it was her royal will and intention, that the dissenters should not be persecuted nor molested in the exercise of their religion. The dissenters were originally displeased, and had petitioned against the

The catho-
lics treated
as common
enemies by
the Earl of
Wharton.

2 Com. Journ. p 494.

† 2 Journ. Lords, p. 316.

‡ An act for explaining and amending an act, intituled An Act to prevent the further Growth of Popery.

1709.

clause for the sacramental test; and now the act, in which it was introduced, was explained and amended, without any attention to their interest. The Lord-lieutenant * substituted fair promises and specious words for that substantial relief, which they expected. He had the address to keep the Dissenters quiet, in the delusive expectation of being eased of this galling restriction in a future session, when it might be done with less umbrage to the Catholics. The cordial sympathy of this House of Commons, with their profligate governor †, is a melancholy illustration of the estrangement of

* Thomas Earl of Wharton was a man of notorious profligacy, but of great address, and no inconsiderable share of talent. The likeness of his portrait, left us by Swift, has never been questioned, though considered by some as too strongly tinged with party-prejudice. It was however taken from life, and with the advantage of personal intimacy. "He had imbibed his fathers principles in government, he was a rigid Presbyterian, but dropped his religion, and took up no other in its stead: excepting that circumstance, he is a firm Presbyterian. He contracted such large debts, that his brethren were forced, out of mere justice, to leave Ireland at his mercy, where he had only time to set himself right. He is very useful in parliament, being a ready speaker, and content to employ his gift upon such occasions, where those, who conceive they have any remainder of reputation or modesty are ashamed to appear." *History of the Four last Years of Queen Ann.*

† Dean Swift, even before the death of this nobleman, said of him: "He has sunk his fortune by endeavouring to ruin one kingdom, and hath raised it by going far in the ruin of another. His administration of Ireland was looked upon as a sufficient ground to impeach him at least for high crimes and misdemeanors: yet he has gained by the government of that kingdom under two

the parliament from the welfare of the Irish people. In August, 1709, the commons presented a most obsequious address to the Lord-lieutenant, in which they assured him, "that they gratefully acknowledged her Majesty's more particular care of them, in appointing his excellency their chief governor, whose equal and impartial administration gave them just reason to hope, and earnestly wish his long continuance in the government *."

1711.

The prevalence of the Tory party in the last four years of Queen Ann, lets in the broadest day-light upon the real grounds of alarm and insecurity, which the English cabinet entertained for the fate of Ireland. They viewed the increasing influence of the Presbyterians with such dread and jealousy, that on the 7th of November, 1711, the lords spiritual and temporal presented an address to her Majesty, in which they complained of the Earl of Wharton's having abused her Majesty's name, in ordering *nolle prosequi* to stop proceedings against one Fleming and others, for disturbing the peace of the town of Drogheda, by setting up a meeting-house, where there had been none for the last twenty-eight years. They represented to her Majesty, that those unjust complainers of persecution, whilst themselves enjoyed ease and security, had exercised great severities towards their conforming neighbours, by denying them common offices of humanity, and by threatening and actually ruining

The Tories
address the
Queen
against the
Presbyterians.

years 45,000 l. by the most favourable computation, half in the regular way, and half in the prudential."

* 2 Comm. Journ. p. 631.

1711. several, who in compliance with their conscience had left their sect. They complained, that the episcopal order had been by them stiled *anti-scriptural*, the holy and religious worship of the established church *superstitious* and *idolatrous*; and that the legislature itself had been censured by a bold author of their's, who had published, in print, *that the Sacramental Test is only an engine to advance a state faction and to debase religion to serve mean and unworthy purposes*. They represented, that amidst repeated provocations, they had been still easy, and had endeavoured by gentle usage to melt them down into a more soft and complying temper; but that all their attempts had proved unsuccessful; that they had returned evil for good; that forbearance had encreased their rage and obstinacy; and that the northern Presbyteries had, in their zeal for proselytism, sent missionaries into several parts of the country, where they had no call nor any congregations to support them: that by the abuse of the allowance of 1200l. per ann. (granted to them by her Majesty for charitable purposes) and other means schism, which had formerly been confined to the North, had then spread itself into many parts of the kingdom. So that they should not be just in their duty to their sovereign or country, if they did not acquaint her Majesty with the danger they apprehended from those great advances, which Presbytery and Fanaticism had made, which if not checked, they doubted not would in time end in the destruction of the constitution both in church and state. They submitted therefore to her Majesty's wis-

dom, whether it were not proper to put a stop to those growing evils, by withdrawing her Majesty's bounty of 1200*l.* per annum. 1711.

This address fully accounts for the introduction and the non-repeal of the Sacramental Test, notwithstanding the strong partiality and bias of the commons, the lord-lieutenant Wharton, and other leading whig characters for the Protestant dissenters of that day. The sentiments, which the tory ministry now publicly avowed, had long influenced the British government. Insincerity and timidity are generally inseparable. The Queen, and many after her example, professed whig principles from policy not conviction. When the tories had overturned the whig administration, the reserve was thrown off, and they expressed their real sentiments in unequivocal language.

Effects of
the Lords'
address
against the
Presbyterians.

Although the tories commanded a decided majority in the peers, yet the whigs still retained a small majority in the commons. Hence those parliamentary differences, so virulently referred to in the lords' address to the Queen, on the 9th of November, 1711*. They alleged, that sincere veneration for her Majesty's royal person and prerogative, and tender regard for the peace and tranquillity of the kingdom, could alone prevail on them thus long to forget the high indignities offered to their house by

Address
of the Lords
against the
Commons,

* 2 Lords' Journ. p. 415. This is given rather at length as the most authentic historical document of the political spirit of the prevailing Protestant parties in Ireland. The Catholics were now reduced so low, as to have no political existence.

1711. the commons, and to submit their private injuries to her Majesty's more public concerns, lest their just resentment, which the commons by their behaviour had so industriously provoked, might obstruct her Majesty's affairs, and thus render effectual the malicious designs of evil-minded men. They complained, that the commons had treated them in a manner wholly unknown to former parliaments, and had addressed them in language more indecent, more opprobrious, than had been used by another House of Commons, at a time when they voted the House of Lords useless. That however justly her Majesty might approve the conduct of the College of Dublin, in the late revolution, still they humbly conceived, that her Majesty did not extend her bounty to them, to promote (in general) *revolution principles*. Principles, which as explained by the pamphlets and libels publicly avowed and celebrated by men of *factionous and seditious tempers*, and particularly in a sermon preached on the 30th of January, dedicated to that very House of Commons, without censure or animadversion, did in a great measure maintain and justify the execrable murder of King Charles the First, and on which might be founded any rebellion against her Majesty and her successors. They insisted upon their right of construing the words and terms used by the commons in their address, viz. That the commons having in their vote mentioned the steady adherence of the provost and fellows of the college to the late revolution, as one consideration of their application for the 5000l. since granted by her Majesty, the subsequent motive mentioned in

that vote, viz for the encouragement of sound revolution principles, could not in good reason or grammar be referred to the late revolution; since adherence to the late revolution was a distinct motive of itself. And it was the known nature of principles, to be as well the rule and guide of future, as of past actions. They disclaimed every intention of misrepresenting the commons to her Majesty for their own actions; they were to be judged by God and her Majesty. But for themselves, they did most solemnly assure her Majesty, they were heartily thankful to Almighty God for the late happy revolution, acknowledging the necessity and justice of it; and that they would at the utmost hazard and expense of their lives and fortunes, defend, support, and maintain her Majesty's sacred person and government, her just prerogative in the choice of her ministers, the church of Ireland, as by law established, and the succession of the crown in the illustrious house of Hanovers against the Pretender, and all those, who designed revolutions either in church or state, against all her Majesty's enemies abroad, and against all Papists, Jacobites, and Republicans at home.

That protestant ascendancy, which the policy of James I. had forced into existence, in order to make head against the Catholics, who then composed the country-party, was under his successor industriously strengthened by Stafford and Ormond, with the like view of bearing down the Catholics as the common enemy. It was generally infected with the puritanical fanaticism of that day. However these men

1711.

Nature of
the original
Protestant
ascendancy
in Ireland.

1713. might have been disrelished in England both by James Charles, they were found fit instruments for crushing the Catholics in Ireland, where hatred of popery commanded favor and impunity. In the days of Charles the First this spirit preceded the breaking out of Cromwell's rebellion; in the days of Charles the Second, it survived the restoration of monarchy; under him, under William and Mary, under Ann were remunerations voted by parliament to the descendants of Cromwellian rebels, for the forward zeal and services of their ancestors in that rebellious cause*.

Prevalence
of the
Whigs in
the Com-
mons, sup-
ported by
the Dissen-
ters.

The whig party in the House of Commons still maintained its majority against the tory administration. It was supported by all the influence of the dissenters, who were then very numerous†. The spirit of party gained daily violence: yet all the political differences which then distracted the kingdom existed between Protestant and Protestant. Although the Catholics

* In the year 1800, the Earl of Clare declared in the House of Peers, that "the civil war of 1641 was a rebellion against the crown of England, (not so of the Irish against the crown of Ireland), and the complete reduction of the Irish rebels by Cromwell redounded essentially to the advantage of the British empire." These sentiments bespeak not a constitutional or even a loyal spirit.

† In every Christian country, different denominations of Christians have at times swerved from, as well as observed, their civil duties. Presbyterians have evinced firm loyalty to monarchs, and Catholics to republics. Every society of Christians lays claim to Evangelical perfection; each holds Christianity practicable under every lawful form of government.

interfered with neither party, they suffered by the occasional excesses of both. The Duke of Shrewsbury, a tory in principle, had long espoused through policy the cause of the whigs; and as converts are generally severe to the party they have abandoned, his Grace when lord-lieutenant was unfavourable to the Catholics, whose religion he had renounced. He was unusually splendid in celebrating the anniversary of King William, and vehement in promoting the Protestant succession.

1713.

By a dissolution of parliament the ministry hoped to gain a majority in the commons, as they had secured it in the lords: but on the return, the whigs still retained a small majority. This they availed themselves of by voting a most severe address* to the Queen against Sir Constantine Phipps†, the chancel-

Dissolution of Parliament, and Whigs still have a majority.

* 2 Journ. Comm. p. 770.

† The private demeanor and official conduct of Sir Constantine Phipps confirmed all the unfavourable prepossessions against him, which the whigs in Ireland had conceived from his zeal and activity in defence of Dr. Sacheverell. He associated only with tories and churchmen, and was entertained by the nobility and gentlemen of that description with the most magnificent hospitality; he received the congratulations and thanks of the clergy as the patron of their order, and the champion of the rights of the church. Under the auspices of such a judge, every legal check upon the licentiousness of the party which he patronised, was suspended. The most malignant attacks upon the dissenters daily issued from the press, and even those publications, which had been condemned in England for their seditious tendency, were reprinted and dispersed without any reprehension from the Irish ministers. Mr. Higgins, a clergyman, who had been put out of the commission of

1713.

lor, who had distinguished himself amongst the tories by his intimacy with Dr. Sacheverell, whose trial had afforded a notable triumph to the whigs of England. The Queen's answer to another address of the commons, dated from Windsor on the 13th of December, 1713, shewed how little congenial with the dispositions of the court these efforts of the commons were. She told them, that * the best way of preserving their religious and civil rights, and securing the Protestant succession, as well as the best proof they could give of their real concern for them, was to proceed with unanimity and temper in supplying the necessary occasions of government, and in establishing peace at home, by discountenancing the restless endeavours of those factious spirits, who attempted to sow jealousies,

the peace by the late chancellor Cox, on account of his indecent and turbulent behaviour, was now restored to his seat by Sir Constantine Phipps. On the very day of resuming his authority, he gave such offence to his colleagues by his insolent and unguarded expressions, that he was presented by the grand jury of the county of Dublin, as a sower of sedition and groundless jealousies among her Majesty's Protestant subjects ; but he was acquitted by the lord-lieutenant and privy-council, to the great joy of the high church-party. (*Annals Ann*, p. 192-3.)

Mr. Higgins had been a coadjutor of Dr. Sacheverell in England, and rivalled him in the vehemence, with which he declaimed upon the danger of the church, and the treachery of the ministers. (*Cunningham*, vol. ii. p. 275.) He was the author of several severe tracts against the dissenters, and was supposed to have drawn up a narrative concerning the conspiracy of the Protestants in Westmeath, which contained reflections injurious to all the whig gentlemen in Ireland.

* 2 Journ. Comm. p. 771.

and raise groundless fears in the minds of her people. 1713.

In so much diffidence and contempt did the British parliament hold that of Ireland during this Queen's reign, that in every matter, which was considered of importance to the British empire they expressly legislated for Ireland, as if Ireland had no parliament of her own. Thus did the British legislature direct the sale of the estates of Irish rebels, and disqualify Catholics from purchasing them; thus did it avoid leases made to Papists; augment small vicarages, and confirm grants made to the Archbishop of Dublin: it permitted Ireland to export linen to the plantations; prohibited the importation of that commodity from Scotland; and appointed the town of New Ross, in the county of Wexford, the port for exporting wool from Ireland to England.

The English Parliament legislates for Ireland.

In the Schism Bill, which Sir William Windham brought into the house of commons in England, in the year 1714, the interference of the British legislature with Ireland was the most remarkable. This bill, which was aimed by the Tory party at the total suppression of the Disenters, was warmly opposed by the Whigs, in both Houses. Into that bill the following clause was introduced: that "where law is the same, the remedy and means for enforcing the execution of the law should be the same; be it therefore enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that all and every the remedies, provisions, and clauses, in and by this act given, made, and enacted, shall extend, and be deemed construed, and adjudged to extend to Ireland, in as full

Schism bill brought into the English House of Commons by Sir Wm. Windham.

1714. and effectual manner, as if Ireland had been expressly named and mentioned in all and every the clauses of this act." Considering the intolerant quality of the act, it was the policy of the tory administration to introduce it with as few objectionable clauses as possible, expecting naturally a warm opposition to it. It was chiefly opposed on the third reading; in which opposition Sir Joseph Jekill was prominently forward; he insisted, that it tended to raise as great a persecution against their protestant brethren, as the primitive Christians ever suffered from the Heathen Emperors, particularly Julian the apostate *. It passed the commons by a majority of 237 voices against 126, without the clause affecting Ireland. This was proposed by the Earl of Anglesea, when the bill was in the committee of the lords, which, after some debate, was carried in the affirmative by the majority of one voice. † In the report made by the Archbishop of York four days after, several severe speeches were made against the clause, particularly by the Duke of Shrewsbury, who returned from Ireland during the debate. The clause was carried by 57 votes against 51; and on the next day the bill was carried by a majority of 5 votes, viz. of 77 against 72 ‡.

* Chand. Deb. vol. V. p. 135.

† Deb. Lords, vol. II. p. 438.

‡ The minister commanded a much larger majority in the English commons than in the lords. For this reason the Queen was advised to call twelve persons up to the house of peers, who were in derision called by the opposite party the college of the twelve

A very strong protest was entered by thirty-four of the leading Whig party, the last part of which relates to Ireland. "The miseries (said they) we apprehend here, are greatly enhanced by extending this bill to Ireland, where the consequences of it may be fatal; for since the number of Papists in that kingdom far exceeds the Protestants of all denominations together; and that the Dissenters are to be treated as enemies, or at least as persons dangerous to that church and state, who have always in all times joined, and still would join with the members of that church against the common enemy of their religion; and since the army there is very much reduced, the Protestants thus unnecessarily divided seem to us to be exposed to the danger

1714.

Strong protest of the Lords against the Schism bill.

apostles. "It was upon these motives (said Swift, Hist. p. 44.) that the treasurer advised her Majesty to create twelve new lords, and thereby disable the sting of faction for the rest of her lifetime: this promotion was so ordered, that a third part were of those on whom, or their posterity, the peerage would naturally devolve; and the rest were those, whose merit, birth, and fortune could admit of no exception." In the reasons *pro* and *con*. given by Swift, we clearly see the opposite spirits of the politicians of that day: the Whigs complained of the ill example set to wicked princes, who might as well create one hundred as twelve peers, which would ensure the command of the House of Lords, and thus endanger our liberties. The Tories insisted, that in our constitution the prince holding the balance of power between the nobility and people, ought to be able to remove from one scale into the other, so as to bring both to an equilibrium; and that the Whigs had been for above twenty years corrupting the nobility with republican principles, which nothing but the royal prerogative could hinder from overspreading us.

1714.

of another massacre, and the protestant religion in danger of being extirpated *.” It must be presumed, that the ministers of that day were as anxious, that this bill against the dissenters should be extended to Ireland, as they were certain, that a similar bill would not have passed the Irish parliament. Such were the forced means resorted to by the last ministry of Queen Ann, to effectuate their intentions upon Ireland respecting the dissenters:

The court
adverse to
the dissent-
ers.

What the opinion and disposition of the court then were as to the Irish dissenters is manifest from the language of Mr. Bromley, principal secretary of state, on the third reading of the Schism Bill: he said, “the dissenters were equally dangerous both to church and state; and if the members, who spoke in their behalf, would have this bill drop, he would readily consent to it, provided another bill were brought in to incapacitate them either to sit in that house, or to vote in elections of members of parliament†.” The collision of the opposite parties in parliament was at that time extremely violent. The Whigs charged the Tories and the whole court-party with an intent to break through the order of the protestant succession, in favour of the Pretender; to these views they attributed every measure as to the grand object of all their wishes, and all their intrigues. On the other hand, the Tories

* Deb. Lords, vol. III. p. 430. The whole protest, containing strong reasons against intolercancy, is given in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LIII.

† Chand. Deb. vol. V. p. 135.

complained of the factious opposition of the Whigs; and the most sensible of their advocates * has declared, that "the designs of that aspiring party at that time were not otherwise to be compassed, than by undertaking any thing, that would humble and mortify the church†."

1714.

In Ireland, the number of those, who took an active interest in the political events of the day was much smaller than in England; but their violence was proportionably greater. The utmost efforts of the British cabinet were unable to reduce the ascendancy of the old protestant interest in the Irish commons: it

Violent struggles of parties in Ireland about the chancellor.

* Swift's History of the last four Years of the Queen, p. 250. This was said on the occasion of the lords having passed the bill for continuing the Act to make Affirmation in lieu of Oaths (surely a reasonable one, and the law now is so), which the commons would not permit to be read even a first time. About this time, Swift shewed his zeal against the Whigs by publishing *The Public Spirit of the Whigs*, and his Preface to Dr. Burnet's Introduction to the History of the Reformation.

† Some time previous to the passing of the Schism Bill, the minister had acquired in the commons a very large accession of strength from a set of members, who, under the style of the *October Club*, had formed themselves into a body, with a view to revive a new country-party in parliament, which might, as in former times, oppose the court in any proceedings they should dislike. The whole body consisted of about 200, and they unexceptionably professed what are commonly called *high church* principles, upon which account they were irreconcilable enemies to the late ministry, and all its adherents; and the grand object of their meetings was to devise methods to spur on those in power to make quicker dispatch in removing all the *Whig leaven* from the employments they still possessed.

1714. } became a trial of strength between the two houses. The influence of the crown preponderated in the lords of Ireland, as it did in the commons of England. The commons presented an address to her Majesty, humbly beseeching her to remove the chancellor, Sir Constantine Phipps, from his place, for the peace and safety of her protestant subjects. The lords, on the other hand, made a warm representation to the queen in favour of the chancellor; they entered minutely into the charges preferred against him, and assured her Majesty, that they were strengthened in their opinion of his having acquitted himself with honour and integrity, from the further enquiries they had since made, and they concluded with strong assurances of unanimity and temper in the dispatch of public business, and in establishing the peace of that kingdom, by discountenancing the restless endeavours of those factious spirits, who attempted to sow jealousies and raise groundless fears in the minds of her Majesty's people. The queen's answer to the address of the commons was a mere echo of the address of the lords, which plainly shewed how strongly her Majesty sided with the latter against the former. Both houses of convocation warmly espoused the cause of the chancellor: they wished her Majesty might never want a servant of equal courage, uprightness, and abilities, and that church and nation might never be without such a friend for the suppression of vice, schism, and faction, and for the support of the royal prerogative as well as the rights and liberties of the subject. The lords had also presented an address to the queen, to justify and

1714.



clear the chancellor of the reproaches and calumnies of one Nuttal, who had traduced him as having been a promoter of the dissensions, that had lately happened in that kingdom: to which her Majesty answered, that she had always looked upon the lord-chancellor as a faithful servant to the crown, a true lover of the constitution in church and state, and was therefore extremely pleased to find, that the lords concurred in the same opinion of him.

Many circumstances concur to prove, that the queen herself was indisposed to the Hanover succession, and that the great object of her last ministry was to reconcile the nation to a favourable reception of her brother. The Whigs were indefatigable in thwarting those measures, which the ministers durst never avow, though most anxious to carry. The Queen was indecisive, and wanted firmness to carry any important resolution into effect. Whatever harsh measures were forced upon her by the Whigs (in England), such as the attainder of her brother, the proclamation of a reward of 50,000*l.* for apprehending him, and the several declarations in support of the Hanover succession, are reported to have preyed strongly upon her mind *, as did also the failure of Leslie's mis-

Queen Ann
indisposed
to the Ha-
nover suc-
cession.

* The secret intentions and views of the last ministry of Queen Ann have never been hitherto clearly laid open. The whole transaction, however, of the Duke of Cambridge's obtaining his writ of summons to parliament, loudly speaks the disinclination of the Queen to that favourite measure of the zealots for the Hanover succession. It certainly was not flattering to the feelings of the Queen, that a prince of the house of Hanover should be provided with a residence, revenue, and proper officers in England,

1714.

sion to Lorrain, in order to convert her brother James to the protestant faith : as it was well understood, that the horror of popery was the only objection, which a

and enjoy a seat in the British senate, where his influence with those, who were ever ready to adore the rising sun might powerfully resist the interest of the crown. This, it was urged by the Queen's friends, was setting her coffin before her eyes. The duke had sent over the following petition to the Queen :

The Humble Petition of George Augustus Duke of Cambridge,

SHEWETH,

That your Majesty having of your great goodness created your petitioner a duke and peer of Great Britain, and it being the constitution, that every peer hath a right and privilege to sit and vote in parliament, your petitioner humbly prays your Majesty to grant him his writ of summons to call him to sit and vote in the present parliament.

This petition was signed on the 17th of March, 1713-4, and on the 11th of the following April, Baron Schutz, envoy extraordinary from the court of Hanover, convened a meeting of the most zealous Whigs, lords and gentlemen at Lord Halifax's house in Westminster ; where it was artfully concerted, that the baron should not present the petition to the Queen, apprehending that her Majesty might have denied the writ, or delayed or eluded the petitioner : and therefore they advised the baron to apply to the lord-chancellor Harcourt, and demand of him the writ of summons, as being the proper officer to cause the same to be made out and delivered ; for which proceeding this reason was then given : that if the lord-chancellor refused to deliver the writ, the house of lords, then sitting, had a jurisdiction and power to enquire into, and immediately censure the denial, and to order the writ to be made out and delivered. But the sudden transport and joy of those lords so convened caused them to forget, that Baron Schutz might have done both, viz. if the Queen were averse, he might immediately resort to the lord-chancellor, and make the demand.

great part of the nation had to his being called to succeed his sister. Circumstanced however as the Pretender was, his cause was abetted by many in England, 1714.

However, the lords advised the baron to keep his orders strictly secret, and to appear at court the next day, when the lords were to wait on and present to the Queen their address about the proclamation, and the removing the Pretender out of Lorrain; and to apply himself to the lord-chancellor, (as in private) and inform him, that he (the baron) had a message to his lordship from Hanover, and desired an hour, when he should wait on and deliver it to him.

The lord-chancellor told the baron, he should be proud to receive any message from his court; and appointed that very afternoon, between five and six, at his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

When the baron came, and (after some compliments) told his lordship, that by order of his highness the Duke of Cambridge, he requested his lordship to make out and deliver to him the writ for the duke; the lord-chancellor was at first much surprised; but after a short pause, asked the baron, whether the matter had been opened to the Queen? To which the baron answering, no; his lordship said, this demand is of such importance, that I can do nothing in it, till I have the Queen's directions, and I will forthwith acquaint her Majesty with it: but laying his hand on the baron's shoulder, desired him to remember he did not refuse the writ: to which the baron smartly replied, and desired his lordship to remember, he had requested of him the writ for the Duke of Cambridge.

A cabinet council was instantly called, and sat that evening from nine o'clock till after eleven; where the Queen being present had the disappointment to find her ministers so little firm to their former professions, as to endeavour to persuade her Majesty, that the writ could not be denied (they may have hinted that the promises of France did not yet justify the refusal). This defection had such an accidental and unexpected influence upon her Majesty's person, as subjected her to an infirmity, that could

1714. and a recruiting for his service had become so public and general, that Lord Bolingbroke brought in a bill, which afterwards passed into a law, that made it high

not be removed, for at the end of three months and nineteen days she demised. Upon the minister's shrinking, the writ was ordered to be made out, and was delivered to Baron Schutz on Saturday the 17th of April, 1714.

This demand being the next day (Tuesday) whispered in the court of requests, cast a damp on the court-party, which they could not dissemble.

The ministers had the vexation to see, on the four last days, viz. Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, the street called Pall-Mall crowded with a vast concourse of coaches, and multitudes of people to congratulate Baron Schutz and Mons. Koninberg (at whose house the baron lodged) upon the demand of the writ, and to express their hopes of the speedy arrival of the Duke of Cambridge. Although the writ were at the end of five days, viz. on Saturday, the 17th of June, 1714, delivered to Baron Schutz, yet the Queen in her anger to see the people so generally run to worship the rising sun, caused Baron Schutz, on the next day, being Sunday, the 18th of April, 1714, to be forbidden the court, and injunctions to be laid on all her ministers not to have any intercourse or correspondence with him: and the ministers alleged as an excuse for this outrage, that the baron had demanded the writ of the lord-chancellor, without having first acquainted her Majesty with his orders, or applied to her for it.

It appears probable, that the ministers applied at this time to France for assistance, and received an agreeable answer; but at that time the French King was engaged in the arduous negotiations at Rastadt, for concluding peace with the Emperor. The urgency of the case was, that if the Duke of Cambridge should forthwith land, as he might, and as the people expected, the ministers' measures would be first entirely disconcerted, and then the French assistance would come unseasonably. The ministers, in order to remove their fears, and to obviate the disappointment,

reason to be enlisted for any foreign prince: a caution which was not at this time found necessary to be had in Ireland, notwithstanding the inordinate propensity

1714.

on the 19th of May, 1714, being within one month after Baron Schutz was forbidden the court, in the Queen's name, sent three letters to Hanover, all signed with her Majesty's own hand.

One of these letters was directed to her Royal Highness the Princess Sophia, in which the Queen declared, "that disaffected persons had entered into measures to fix a prince of her highness's blood in her Majesty's dominions, even whilst she was living, that she (the Queen) for her part, never thought such a project could have entered into her highness's mind; but now she perceived her electoral highness was come into that sentiment; and therefore she (the Queen) declared, that such a proceeding would infallibly endanger the succession itself."

Another of these letters was directed to his Highness the Elector of Brunswick; declaring, "that if his electoral highness's son (the Duke of Cambridge) presumed to come within the Queen's estate (i. e. her dominions); she would oppose him with all her power."

The third letter was directed to the Electoral Prince (then Duke of Cambridge), and declared, "that his design of coming into her Majesty's kingdom ought to be first opened to her, and to have had her permission; and that therefore nothing could be more dangerous to the right of succession in his line than such a proceeding." From the complexion of these transactions it will be readily admitted, that the Queen must have been disgusted with the indelicate and compulsory means used by the Whigs of that day, to ensure the Hanover succession during her life. The workings of nature on behalf of her brother, upon whose head they had forced her to proclaim a reward, together with the many thwarting and humiliating instances of opposition to her will from the Whig party, render it more than probable, that she either originally was, or that she became at last insincere in her professions, promises, and exertions to promote the establishment.

1714. of the Irish parliament to harass and oppress the catholics with penal statutes. Now, for the first time, their loyalty was above suspicion : and a Stuart passed by an opportunity of punishing them. The queen died on the 1st of August, 1714.

CHAPTER III.

The Reign of George I.

UPON the demise of Queen Ann, the Tory party preponderated in the landed interest of England; the Whigs possessed a majority in the privy-council. The Tories were without a head, dispirited, distracted, and consequently irresolute. The Whigs acted in concert and with energy. They brought into action the principles they had always avowed, and seated the Elector of Hanover on the thrones of Great Britain and Ireland. He was proclaimed and acknowledged King without opposition*. The Tories, as

1714.

 Accession
 of George I.

* Viz. By the Act of Settlement, as George the First, son of Ernest Augustus, Elector of Brunswick, and Sophia, grand-daughter of King James the First. The author of Lord Chesterfield's Memoirs relates, that Lord Harcourt often declared, (and Bishop Pearce frequently mentioned it), that Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, came to him and to Lord Bolingbroke on the death of Queen Ann, and said, nothing remained but to proclaim King James. He further offered (if they would give him a guard) to put on his lawn sleeves, and head the procession. Or, as Lord Orford has retailed it, (Remin. 291.) to proclaim the Pretender at Charing-Cross, *in pontificalibus*. George was proclaimed in England on the 1st of August, 1714, a few hours after the Queen had expired. A similar proclamation was published in Dublin on the 6th of August, about seven o'clock in the evening, and on the next day another proclamation issued, signed also by the

1715.

they had every reason to expect, were dismissed from his councils, and the whole management of public affairs was committed to the Whigs:

Parliament of Ireland convened, and passes several acts in favour of the Hanover succession.

The parliament of Ireland convened in November, 1715, was prominently conspicuous in manifesting their zeal for the Hanover succession, and the Whig administration. They passed acts for recognizing the King's title; for the security of his person and government; for setting a price (50,000*l.*) upon the Pretender's head, and for attainting the Duke of Ormond: and they voted the supplies without murmur or opposition. The commons, during the last Tory administration, had brought in a bill to attain the Pretender: and it was generally believed, that her Majesty had prorogued the parliament, with the direct view of preventing that bill from passing against her brother: and that, with a similar intent to facilitate his access to the throne, she had disbanded the greatest part of the army, who were protestants in Ireland. They eagerly, therefore, seized an opportunity so favourable for ingratiating themselves with his Majesty, and for justifying that conduct, which had been reprobated as turbulent and factious by the late government. A very strong address was presented by the commons to the King, that his Majesty would be pleased, for the security of his government, and the protestant interest of Ireland; to remove the Earl of Anglesey from his councils and service in that kingdom*.

Lord-primate and Sir Constantine Phipps, chancellor, for disarming all papists and suspected persons, and seizing their houses.

* Vide vol. III. Journ. Comm. p. 67. This address is founded

Notwithstanding the recruiting for the service of the Pretender were one of the principal grounds for the commons' address against the Earl of Anglesey, yet so fully convinced was the ministry of that day of the unquestionable loyalty of the Irish nation, that the lords-justices*, in their speech to the parliament, rendered it the most honourable testimony, in saying, "that it was with no small satisfaction, that they observed the calm, which that kingdom (formerly the seat of so many rebellions) then enjoyed, whilst the traitorous enemies to the King and our happy establishment, discouraged by their early and steady zeal for the protestant succession, had thought fit to change the place of action, and attempt elsewhere to disturb his Majesty's government." Nor was this the soothing art of adulation, but the cordial effusion of active confidence: for the lords-justices added, that his Majesty had ordered an addition to be made to each company of the militia, till such time as he could replace those regiments, which the necessity of his affairs had obliged him then to draw from Ireland to suppress

1715.

Honourable
testimony
of Irish loy-
alty from
the lords-
justices.

on the fact of the recruiting service for the Pretender having been permitted with impunity in Dublin. It throws strong light upon the history of those days, and is to be seen in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LIV. I have also, in the first volume of that work, p. 238, given a letter of Dean Swift to Archbishop King, in which the patriotic Dean very clearly distinguishes between the *Tory* and the *Jacobite*.

* *Viz.* The Duke of Grafton and the Earl of Galway. The speech was delivered by the Duke of Grafton; for which vide II. Lords' Journ. 453.

1715. the rebels in Great Britain, wherein their safety was equally concerned with that of his other subjects.

Insurrection in North Britain. Danger in England and security in Ireland.

Whilst rebellion was openly making alarming progress in North Britain under the Earl of Mar, at the head of 10,000 Scotch presbyterians, and no part of South Britain was secure from the attempts of the friends of a catholic pretender to the throne, catholic Ireland was the only part of the British empire for which government felt secure, and therefore drew from it the usual sources of national defence to give strength to protestant Britain. Although malice were not yet saturated in calumniating the Irish, they escaped the charge of guilt in the rebellion of 1715. Yet those very lords-justices, who bore such honourable testimony to the tried loyalty of the Irish catholics, most inconsistently treated them as an hostile and divided people. "We must recommend to you (said they in their speech to the commons) in the present conjuncture, such unanimity in your resolutions, as may once more put an end to all other distinctions in Ireland, but that of *protestant* and *papist*."

Impolicy of treating the Irish catholics as enemies.

Such was the horror, in which the catholics were then holden, that the usual parliamentary phrase for them was, the *common enemy*. Scarcely an address concerning them during this reign reached the throne, which did not brand them with this appellation. Their meritorious loyalty on this occasion procured them neither favour nor indulgence from government: for the lords-justices, in their answer to the address of the commons, praying them to give directions for securing the persons of such papists and other persons as they

should suspect of being disaffected to his Majesty's government, assured them, that they had written letters in council to all the governors of counties, sheriffs, mayors, and chief magistrates of corporations to put the militia in immediate condition for service, requiring them at the same time strictly to execute *the laws against papists* *.

1715.

The then recent statute of Queen Ann, which imposed such a mass of rigour upon the catholics, required also the sacramental test from every officer civil or military, from all persons having fee or salary belonging to any office by patent or grant, or having any command or place of trust under the crown. This included many protestant dissenters, to whom government did not wish to extend the severity of that law. The following resolution accordingly passed the house of commons: †“ That such of his Majesty's protestant dissenting subjects of this kingdom as have taken commissions in the militia, or acted in the com-

Partiality in
favour of
dissenters.

* 3 Journ. Com. 60. It was resolved, *nemine contradicente*, “ That it is the indispensable duty of all magistrates to put the laws in immediate execution against all popish priests, who shall officiate contrary to law, and that such magistrates, who neglect the same, be looked upon as *enemies to the constitution*.” And ib. 749, it was in like manner resolved, “ That an humble address be presented to their excellencies the lords-justices, that they will be pleased to issue a proclamation, promising a reward to such, who shall discover any person, who is enlisted, or shall hereafter enlist in his Majesty's service, to be a papist, in order to their being turned out, and punished with the utmost severity of the law.”

† 3 Journ. Commons, p. 100.

1718. mission of the array, have hereby done a seasonable service to his Majesty's royal person and government, and the protestant interest in this kingdom. Resolved, that any person who shall commence a prosecution against a dissenter, who has accepted, or who shall accept of a commission in the array or militia, is an enemy to King George and the protestant interest, and a friend to the Pretender." This marked partiality in favour of the Irish dissenters, whilst an army of Scottish presbyterians was in open rebellion in favour of the Pretender, cannot be laid to the account of liberality or general toleration: for that very parliament of 1715, passed an act to restrain papists from being high or petty constables, although a single arm had not been raised by a catholic in Ireland in support of the Pretender, and every nerve of government was strained to enforce the rigorous execution of the penal laws against them*. The consequence was a general and most rigid persecution against the catholics for the mere exercise of their religion: their priests were dragged from their concealment, many were taken from the altars whilst performing divine service, exposed in their vestments to the derision of the soldiery, then committed to gaol, and afterwards

* Doctor Goldsmith has observed, that "it was the artifice during this and the succeeding reign to stigmatize all those, who testified their discontent against government, as Papists and Jacobites. All, who ventured to speak against the violence of their measures were reproached as designing to bring in the Pretender: and most people were consequently afraid to murmur, since discontent was so near a-kin to treason." *Hist. Geo. I.*

banished the kingdom. The lords-justices granted orders for apprehending the Earls of Antrim and Westmeath, the Lords Netterville, Cahir, and Dillon, and most of the principal catholic landholders, as persons suspected of disaffection to his Majesty's government. 1718.

About this time, a decree of the Exchequer, in a cause between Sherlock and Annesley was appealed from to the Irish peers, and by them reversed. From their sentence Annesley appealed to the English peers, by whom the judgment given in his favour by the court of Exchequer was confirmed; and an order issued to put him in possession of the disputed estate. Against this determination Sherlock petitioned the Irish house of lords. In this affair, the dignity of the peers and the privileges of the nation were deeply involved. The first step the Irish lords took, was to propose to the consideration of the judges, whether by the laws of the land an appeal lay from a decree of the court of Exchequer in Ireland, to the King in parliament in Great Britain? This question they determined in the negative. The peers then resolved, that they would support their honour, jurisdiction, and privileges, by giving the petitioner Sherlock relief. To such extremes were matters carried, that the Irish house of peers ordered the barons of the Exchequer to be taken into the custody of the Black Rod, for having obeyed an order of the English house of peers. On the other hand, a very explicit and elaborate representation of all the proceedings of the lords in Ireland, concerning appeals, was transmitted

Difference between the Irish and English peers upon the appellant jurisdiction.

1718. to his Majesty, which was laid before the British house of lords and read: whereupon they resolved, that the barons of the court of Exchequer in Ireland, in proceeding in obedience to their orders, had acted with courage according to law, in support of his Majesty's prerogative, and with fidelity to the crown of Great Britain; and that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to confer on them some mark of his royal favour, as a recompense for the injuries they had received, by being unjustly censured, and illegally imprisoned for doing their duty*. They ordered a bill to be brought in, for the better securing the dependency of Ireland upon the crown of Great Britain, which passed into a law†.

Duke of Ormond heads an invasion from Spain.

About this time a fresh attempt was made in favor of the Pretender by the intrigues of the Cardinal Alberoni. An armament of twelve ships of the line, and several transports, was equipped, having on board 6000 regular troops, and arms for 12000 men. The command of this fleet was committed to the Duke of Ormond, with the title of captain-general of his ca-

* The Duke of Leeds entered a very long protest against these resolutions, which being very pointed and interesting, is given in the Appendix to my Hist. Review, No. LVI.

† 5 Geo. c. v. by which it was enacted, that the kingdom of Ireland was of right subordinate to, and dependent upon the imperial crown of Great Britain, as being inseparably united and annexed thereunto; and that the British parliament had of right full power to make laws to bind the people and the kingdom of Ireland, and that the house of lords of Ireland had not any appellate jurisdiction.

tholic Majesty. He was provided with declarations in the name of the Spanish monarch, importing, that for many good reasons he had sent part of his land and sea forces into England and Scotland to act as auxiliaries to King James. The Duke of Ormond sailed from Cadiz and had proceeded as far as Cape Finisterre, when the fleet was overtaken and dispersed by a storm, which entirely defeated the intended expedition*.

1719.

In the year 1719, the parliament passed an Act for exempting the Protestant dissenters of that kingdom from certain penalties, to which they were (in common with the Catholics) then subject†. And the preamble of the act sets forth, that “the granting some ease and indulgence to the Protestant dissenters in the exercise of religion, might be an effectual means to unite his Majesty’s Protestant subjects in interest and affection.” The Duke of Bolton, in his speech on the day that the bill passed, not very warrantably mis-

Indulgences
to protestant
dissenters.

* In justice to the unshaken loyalty of Ireland, it should be recollected, that at this time the tenantry on the Ormond property was the most numerous in Ireland; the bulk of that nation was of the same religion as the Pretender; Ireland lay more contiguous to Spain than Great Britain, and was less provided for defence against invasion. Yet so sternly loyal to the House of Hanover were the Irish Catholics, even at this early period after the accession of the present illustrious family to the throne, that not even the intriguing Alberoni, the Spanish Monarch, the Catholic Pretender, or his enthusiastic and then desperate supporter Ormond, durst even attempt to seduce them from their allegiance and civil duty.

† 6th Geo. c. 7.

1720. quoted the words of the statute, in order to take off the sting, which the marked partiality for the few to the exclusion of the many necessarily imported. He recommended to them in the words of one of those excellent bills passed that day, *an union in interest and affection amongst ALL his Majesty's subjects.* Unfortunately for the people of Ireland the words of the statute were operative and lasting: those of the lord-lieutenant insidious, false, and transient. The speech of the Lieutenant acquired instant circulation; the people read what they never experienced; and they smarted under what they never read.

Harshness
of the Duke
of Grafton
towards the
Catholics.

The Duke of Grafton, in closing the next session of parliament, manifested a degree of harshness towards the Catholics, little responsive to their tried steadiness to the new family on the throne. He recommended * to the parliament to put the laws in execution, and to keep a watchful eye over the Papists, since he had reason to believe, that the number of Popish priests was daily encreasing in that kingdom, and far exceeded what by the indulgence of the law was allowed.

Irish loyalty
acted upon.

The same noble Duke in opening the session of 1723, rendered to the Catholics, perhaps an inadvertent, certainly not an unimportant eulogy, upon the actual confidence placed in their loyalty in the very acme of alarm and danger. The traitorous projects (said his Grace) "that were near ripe for execution the last year, made it advisable to call for

six regiments of foot from Ireland, and as the scēie of blood and confusion, that was then opening in Great Britain, must have soon reached this country, his Majesty could not more effectually shew his tender regard for his subjects, than by ordering that seasonable reinforcement for securing peace in that part of his Majesty's dominions." It is singular, that in the very speech, which proved that the catholics were so little suspected of disaffection to the government, as to make it advisable and safe to send six regiments from catholic Ireland, for the defence of protestant Britain, his Grace added *, " I cannot but think it a matter deserving your serious attention, to provide some laws for the further strengthening of the protestant interest of this kingdom, particularly for preventing more effectually the eluding of those in being against popish priests, it being too notorious, that the number of such is of late greatly encreased."

In consonance with the repeated recommendations of this lord-lieutenant, the commons came to eight violent † resolutions against the catholics, which passed without a dissentient voice, and thereupon leave was given to bring in heads of a bill for explaining and amending the acts to prevent the further growth of popery, and for strengthening the protestant interest in that kingdom. Heads of a bill were accordingly

Violent resolutions of the commons, and a bill in consequence.

* 3 Journ. Com. p. 314.

† 3 Journ. p. 36, 2d of October, 1723. They may be seen in my Historical Review, vol. I. p. 252.

1723.

prepared, with a clause for castrating every catholic clergyman that should be found in the realm. The bill, thus surcharged with this Gothic barbarism, was presented on the 15th of November, 1723, to the lord-lieutenant by the commons at the castle, and they most earnestly requested his Grace *to recommend the same in the most effectual manner to his Majesty*, humbly hoping from his Majesty's goodness and his Grace's zeal for his service and the protestant interest of that kingdom, that the same might be obtained to pass into a law*. It was transmitted to England, and for the honour of humanity there suppressed with becoming indignation†. The lord-lieutenant, on proroguing the parliament, consoled them for the loss of their favourite bill, by attributing its failure to their having brought it in at so advanced a period of the session: recommending to them again a more vigorous execution of the penal laws against the catholics, and assuring them, that he would contribute his part towards the prevention of the growing evil (of popery), by giving proper directions, that henceforward such

* 3 Journ. Com. p. 366. His Grace returned the following answer. "I have so much at heart a matter which I recommended to the consideration of parliament at the beginning of this session, that the house of commons may depend upon a due regard on my part to what is desired."

† Some Irish historians attribute the failure of this bill to the humane interposition of Cardinal Fleury with Mr. Walpole. Yet surely there needed no Gallic interference for the damnation of a law of such savage turpitude.

persons only should be put into the commission of the peace as had distinguished themselves by their fidelity to his Majesty, and by their steady adherence to the protestant interest*.

1723.

The latter part of this reign was a notable æra for a new division of parties in Ireland. The old revolutionary party, which affected Whiggism and had descended from and retained the spirit and principles of the Oliverians, was the most numerous in the commons. The old Tories had an ascendancy in the lords. The third party wished well to their country, and successfully adapted to its government all the genuine Whig principles, upon which the liberty of England had been so firmly established; but the practical application of which had been first made to Ireland by the patriotic efforts of Mr. Molyneux†.

Three protestant parties in Ireland.

* 3 Journ. Com. p. 389.

† Lord Clare's speech on the union is a curious repository of some modern opinions upon the necessity of an English or protestant ascendancy in Ireland: (p. 13.) "It is a melancholy truth, that from that day, (James I.) all have clung to the popish religion, as a common bond of union, and an hereditary pledge of animosity to British settlers and the British nation. What alternative then remained to the King for retaining this country under the dominion of his crown? In the modern revolutionary phrase, the physical consequence of the country was arrayed against the English colony and the English government. He was therefore driven to the necessity of treating the old inhabitants as a conquered people, and governing their country as an English province, or of fortifying his protestant colony by investing them with the artificial power of a separate government." Primate Boulter, who, from the year 1724 to the year

1723.

These three parties were all protestants. How widely soever they differed from each other, they all united

1742, was the main spring of the English politics and the instrument of the British cabinet in Ireland, gave to the Duke of Newcastle the following caution against Swift. (*Vol. I. p. 62, Boulter's Let.*) "The general report is, that Dean Swift designs for England in a little time; and we do not question his endeavours to misrepresent his Majesty's friends here, wherever he finds an opportunity: but he is so known, as well as the disturbances he has been the fomentor of in this kingdom, that we are under no fear of his being able to disserve any of his Majesty's faithful servants, by any thing that is known to come from him." Swift supported the natural interests of Ireland against the Dissenters and Whig party, who, in his ideas, endeavoured to monopolize the political influence of the country, and against the power of the British cabinet, whose system it was to keep Ireland in a state of abject subserviency. "Therefore," said he, in *his State of Ireland*, "it is too well known, that we are forced to obey some laws we never consented to; which is a condition I must not call by its true uncontrolled name, for fear of Lord Chief Justice Whithed's ghost, with his *libertas et natale solum* written for a motto on his coach, as it stood at the door of the court, whilst he was perjurying himself to betray both." Swift was a true patriot, and had rendered himself particularly obnoxious to government, by publishing his *Drapier's Letters*, and other patriotic works in defence of his oppressed country, but especially by his proposal for the universal use of Irish manufactures, in clothes and furniture of houses, utterly rejecting and renouncing every thing wearable that came from England: on account of which publication, a prosecution was set on foot against Waters the printer, by the express command of the lord-lieutenant, who sent to the Lord Chief Justice Whithed before the trial, informing him, that a most seditious, factious, and virulent libel had been published, with a design of setting the two kingdoms at variance; and therefore that the printer should be prosecuted with all the

1723.

in one common principle of opposing the catholics, as the common enemy. The most remote tendency to favour them would, at that time, have been construed an overt attempt to bring back the Pretender. The catholics, broken down by oppression, scarcely claimed their rights of existence, and were occasionally made the passive instruments of the three other parties, according to the exigencies of their several temporary

severity of the law. The lord-chief-justice's zeal on such an occasion wanted no spur. He out-ran his commission, by indecently declaring towards the commencement of the trial, that the author's intention was to bring in the Pretender. Government had offered a reward of 300*l.* for the discovery of the author of these letters: but so popular and interesting to Ireland was the subject of them, that no one was base enough to betray him. This firmness in the cause brought on the prosecution of the printer, whom the jury acquitted. Yet so determinately was the chief-justice bent upon procuring a verdict for the crown, that he kept the jury out eleven hours, and sent them nine times out of court, until at last he wearied them into a *special verdict*. The profligacy of this courtly judge is alluded to by the primate in a letter to the Duke of Newcastle, (*vol. I. p. 112.*) which accounts for his lordship's anxiety to be removed to the common pleas, where he would be placed out of the occasion of executing again such commands of government. "My Lord Chief Justice Witsied has been with me to desire he may be recommended to succeed Lord Chief Justice Wyndham. He represents, that he has with great zeal and fidelity served his Majesty, and made himself many enemies by so doing, and would hope for this favour as a reward of his services. I must do him the justice to say, that he has certainly served his Majesty with great zeal and affection, and has drawn on himself the anger of the Jacobites by so doing, and other discontented persons here, by discountenancing seditious writings in the affair of the halfpence."

1724.

projects: and were too often made objects of new rigour and persecution, for the sole purpose of withdrawing the attention of their opponents from measures, which the particular parties wished to carry or oppose. Primate Boulter always affected to term the patriotic party *the discontented*, and not unfrequently the *king's enemies*: and of their successful opposition to the measures of those, whom his grace termed *the King's servants*, (consequently his friends) he loudly complained.

The job of
Wood's pa-
tent for
halfpence.

In no instance were the exertions of the patriots more brilliantly successful, than in opposing Mr. Wood's patent for coining halfpence, which they considered as an infamous job*. There had not been for many years a coinage of copper in Ireland; the low medium of halfpence and farthings had become very scarce; and the deficiency was found to be attended with great inconveniency. Applications were made in vain to England for a new coinage. What was refused

* Primate Boulter, within a fortnight after his arrival in Dublin, informed the Duke of Newcastle, that "they were in a very bad state, and the people so poisoned with apprehensions of Wood's halfpence, that he did not see there could be any hopes of justice against any person for seditious writings, if he did but mix something about Wood in them. All sorts were determinately set against them. Pamphlets and the discourses of some people of weight ran very much upon the independency of Ireland; which, in their present state, was a very popular notion. That though all people were equally set against Wood, yet many of the madnesses were supposed to come from papists mixing with and setting on others, with whom they formerly had no manner of correspondence."

1724.
}

to the voice of the Irish nation, was granted to the intrigues of William Wood. He obtained a patent for coining copper halfpence and farthings for the use of Ireland, to the amount of 108,000*l*. They were cast of such base alloy, that the whole mass was not worth 8000*l*. Of this base coin he poured an immense infusion into Ireland. Brass multiplied beyond example: was not only used in change, but attempted to be forced in payments. The Irish nation took the alarm, and made it a national cause: and it may be said to have been the first, in which all parties in Ireland had ever come to issue with the British cabinet. The Irish parliament, in an address to the throne, told the King, they were called upon by their country to represent the ill consequences to the kingdom likely to result from Wood's patent: that the prospect, which it presented to view was the diminution of the revenue and the ruin of trade. An application from the privy-council of Ireland to the King spoke the same language: and addresses to the like effect from most of the city corporations throughout the kingdom were handed up to the throne. At the quarter-session the country gentlemen and magistrates unanimously declared against it. And the grand jury of the county of Dublin presented all persons, who attempted to impose upon the people of Ireland the base coin, as enemies to government, and to the safety, peace, and welfare of his Majesty's subjects. It was not to be expected, that an individual speculator, who could raise an interest with the British cabinet more

1725. powerful than the united voice* of the whole people of Ireland, should forego all his golden prospects from the opposition of those, whom he had in the first instance baffled and defeated. He still commanded such influence with his patrons, as to bring forth a report from the privy-council of England in his favour, which cast very severe (not to say indecent) reflections upon the parliament of Ireland, for having opposed his patent. After the nation had been kept in turbulent agitation for a year by the real or imaginary effects of this job, tranquillity was restored by his Majesty's revocation of the patent, which put an end to the currency of this base money, and opened to Ireland a dawn of confidence, that their sovereign's ear would not be for ever shut against the united voice of his Irish people†.

* For the address of the commons to the King, in the first instance, vide 3 Journ. 325. and for their address to his Majesty on his gracious answer to their first address, 368.

† Primate Boulter found the spirit of the nation so determined against Wood's patent, that he reluctantly recommended its revocation. Yet on the uniform principle of ministers protecting their own creatures, he contended, "that Wood could not be supposed willing to resign it without a proper compensation, (as if the obtaining such a patent had been a work of meritorious or laborious service), and that the seditious and clamorous behaviour of too many here, must rather have tended to provoke his Majesty and his ministry to support the patent, than to take any extraordinary steps to sink it: and that therefore the most proper way seemed to be, the proposing some reasonable amends to Mr. Wood in order to his resigning the patent." However, upon the 25th of September, 1725, he

Little else worth recording happened during the remainder of George's reign, that affected Ireland. His Majesty was suddenly taken ill in his carriage, as he was travelling through Holland to visit his electoral dominions. The attendants, that were in his carriage, perceived in the morning after he had left Delden, where he had supped heartily and slept soundly, that one of his hands was motionless: they chafed and rubbed it with spirits without effect: his tongue soon began to swell, and he had barely strength to order them to hasten to Osnaburgh. His senses failed him, and he died the next morning, in the 68th year of his age, and in the 13th of his reign.

1727.

Death of
George I.

The violence of political bias, under which the character and reign of this monarch have been handed to posterity has palmed upon the public a very unfaithful portrait of both. The inclination of the nation to favour the Whig party, which, during the whole of this reign, governed the King, senate, and people with a despotism little congenial with their avowed principles of civil liberty, and the crushing of the rebellion in favour of the Pretender, who more from his religion than politics, was disrelished by the nation, encouraged the successful party to flatter, and deterred the depressed party from publishing even a faithful representation of that portion of our history. George, from his arrival in England, threw himself without reserve into the arms of the party, which seated

Character
of the reign
of George I.

tells Lord Townsend, "I must likewise acknowledge the obligation we all lie under here for your procuring so great an instance of his Majesty's goodness, as the revoking of Wood's patent."

1727. him on the throne. Throughout his reign he may be said to have been rather governed by the leaders of party, than to have governed a free people. To their passions and interests, rather than to their council and advice, he was totally subservient. They commanded a majority in parliament, and George too well knew, that his title to the British throne was wholly parliamentary. He came to the throne at the mature age of fifty-four years: his comportment was reserved and formal, and little reconcileable with the liberty he allowed himself with the sex. The Duchess of Kendall, his left-handed wife or avowed mistress, and the Countess of Darlington, enjoyed at the same time the royal protection: and latterly Mrs. Ann Brett, an English lady, was formally admitted into the seraglio of St. James's, with the promise of a title, which the King lived not to grant. They were constant food for the venom of the Jacobites, and systematically supported by the Whig party. The influence, which these ladies exercised upon the royal mind, opened and kept up during the whole of the reign, a regular system of ministerial intrigue, which ever must accompany such predilections of the monarch. The various plots and counterplots of Lord Bolingbroke, Bishop Atterbury, and others of the Jacobitical party, which were generally defeated by the address of Sir Robert Walpole, scarcely produced even a remote effect on Ireland. George had the good fortune to have the merit of his reign attributed personally to himself, and its defects thrown upon the corruption and false principles of his ministers.

CHAPTER IV.

The Reign of George II.

UPON the demise of George the First, his son ascended the throne without disturbance or opposition. Now, for the first time since the revolution, did the catholics of Ireland venture to approach the throne by a public act of their body. The penal laws had been somewhat multiplied, and rigorously executed during the late reign. It was still fresh in their minds, that the severe laws of Queen Ann were said to have been passed against them, as a punishment for their having neglected to address her on her coming to the throne. The extreme virulence, with which they were calumniated from the press, the pulpit, and the senate, on the demise of that Queen, had deterred them from offering any address upon the accession of the Hanover family. At this juncture, however, they drew up an address of congratulation, which in a dignified manner expressed loyalty to their sovereign, and pledged them to a continuance of their peaceful and quiet demeanour. It was presented to the lords-justices by Lord Delvin and several respectable catholic gentlemen; but it was received with silent contempt. The lords-justices*, who were humbly en-

1727.
 Accession
 of George
 II. Ad-
 dressed by
 the catho-
 lics.

* They were Primate Boulter, Thomas Wyndham, and William Conolly.

1727. treated to transmit it to his Majesty, never condescended to make an answer to those, who presented it; nor is it known to this day, whether it reached the hands of the sovereign, or were strangled in its birth by the heads of the English interest, who dreaded nothing so much as the united loyalty of the people of Ireland.

Boulter's
principle of
governing.

The great engine, patron, and supporter of the *English* interest in Ireland, was Primate Boulter. He affected to confound under one common denomination of the *disaffected*, and *King's enemies*, all the Tories and patriots, who preferred an Irish to an English interest in their native country. Sensible that his means of supporting the English interest would not bear the light, his Grace insidiously effected a very strong and unjust measure, which would probably have failed, had it been fairly proposed and freely debated in the then prevailing temper of the public mind. Not one of the acts of Elizabeth or Ann had gone the length of depriving the catholics of their elective franchise. By the 2d of Ann, *An Act to prevent the further Growth of Popery*, every elector was required to take the oaths of allegiance and abjuration; to which no catholic objected. The attention, which the nation began to pay to their civil rights, and the political weight, which the catholics bore in elections, awakened the primate's jealousy and alarm, and drove him to the desperate resolution of upholding the English interest * in Ireland by disfranchising

* As much of Primate Boulter's letters as the editor has favoured us with, openly avows this prelate's principles upon the subject.

above four-fifths of its population. An opposition to the English interest, which it ever was the pride of this prelate to support, was dreaded from the patriots, who systematically opposed any foreign ascendancy over the native rights and interests of their country. It was not natural, that the body of the Irish people should be forward in supporting such foreign ascendancy, whether English or Protestant. The catholics' address to the throne was not carried without a considerable division of the catholic body* ; of which the primate so dexterously availed himself in the then pending elections, that on the 24th of Au- 1727.

Within three weeks after the death of the King, he writes to the Duke of Newcastle, (vol. I. p. 177.) " Every thing here is very quiet:" and on the same day he informs Lord Townsend (p. 176), " We have no other bustle amongst us, than what arises from the warm canvass going on in all parts about the election of members for the ensuing parliament." He had three days before apprised Lord Carteret, then lord-lientenant, (p. 173), " that the whole kingdom was in the utmost ferment about the coming elections. I can safely appeal (said his Grace) to your Excellency for my having to the best of my power served his late Majesty, and supported the *English interest* here."

* On the 20th of July, 1727, the primate wrote to Lord Carteret: " I hear this day, that the address yesterday presented by some Roman Catholics, occasions great heats and divisions among those of that religion here." (Vol. I. p. 188.) That the constant view of this prelate was the maintenance of an English ascendancy, and to keep down the native influence of Ireland, appears from the whole tenor of his correspondence. His editor assures us, that these letters will ever remain the most authentic history of Ireland, for the space of time, in which they were written; viz. from 1724 to 1742, during which his Grace was thirteen times one of the lords-justices.

1727. gust, 1727, he assured the lord-lieutenant, *that the elections would generally go well.*

System of
dividing
Ireland
within it-
self.

Lord Carteret, whose administration lasted from 1725 to 1731, has had the credit of leniency and humanity, from having discountenanced the execution of the penal laws against the catholics. He certainly had the policy not publicly to aggravate the evil of famine by religious persecution. Yet no real friend to Ireland could have coalesced with Primate Boulter in the systematic support of an English interest, by dividing Ireland within itself *. Fearful of an effectual opposition to a measure of such unjust severity, though of the highest political import, not a syllable in the speech from the throne bore allusion to it: no heads of any bill transmitted imported new penalties against the catholics: on the contrary, the lord-lieutenant's speech recommended expressly the consideration of such laws, as might be necessary to be made for the encouragement of manufactures and the employment of the poor; and now for the first time the lord-lieutenant spoke of "† the gracious instances of his majesty's concern for the happiness of his people,

* This is verified by the primate's words, in his letter to the Duke of Newcastle, on the 19th of January, 1724: "I find, by my own and other inquiries, that the people of every religion, country, and party here, are alike set against Wood's halfpence, and that their agreement in this has had a most unhappy influence on the state of this nation, by bringing on intimacies between Papists and Jacobites and the Whigs, who before had no correspondence with them."

† 3 Journ. Com. p. 463.

and the good opinion he had always had of the loyalty and affection of *his subjects of Ireland* ;” dropping the invidious restriction of his Majesty’s protection, grace, and favour to his *protestant subjects*. 1727.

Many of the catholics began now to consider themselves *Irish-men* as well as *Irish catholics*. Though deprived themselves of civil rights, they put a high value on them, and in defiance of religious differences made *civil* liberty a common cause with their protestant brethren. This novel coalition between *protestants and catholics* in support of the interests of Ireland, became formidably alarming to that party, whose sole mission was to keep up an English interest in that kingdom. Government foresaw the necessary progress of this native coalition against the English interest, and at one blow put an end to the political existence of at least four-fifths of the nation by depriving them of the noblest birth-right and invaluable privilege of the subject *. Without any annunciation of such intention, without notice to any of the parties interested, without even a charge or accusation of guilt, by the unexpected introduction of a clause into a bill, the title of which denounced no further severity against the catholics †, was a vital stab

The catholics deprived of the elective franchise.

* Thus did Lord Chief Justice Holt usually call the elective franchise. I have adhered to this proportion of protestants and catholics, because Primate Boulter in this very year avowed to the Archbishop of Canterbury (vol. I. p. 210.) *There are probably in this kingdom five Papists at least to one Protestant.*

† 1 Geo. II. c. ix. An Act for further regulating the Election of Members of Parliament, and preventing the irregular proceed-

1728. given to the constitutional rights of the bulk of the Irish people. It was enacted, "that no Papist, though not convict, should be entitled or admitted to vote at the election of any member to serve in parliament as knight, citizen, or burgess, or the election of any magistrate for any city or other town corporate." This truly sweeping clause at once brushed off four-fifths of the people of Ireland from any representation in parliament: it was inserted by way of amendment without notice, without debate, without council; thus did the commons sign the death-warrant of four fifths of their constituents, whose voices had given them their legislative existence*.

Internal dis-
tresses of
Ireland.

The stagnation of trade and want of employment in the manufactures, in part occasioned and in part aggravated the scarcity of the years 1728 and 1729. The first session of the parliament under George II.

ings of Sheriffs and other Officers in electing and returning such Members. Sect. vii.

* The catholics in Galway having successfully opposed Lord Clanrickard's interest, he prevailed on the minister of that day to introduce this clause, to deprive them of their franchise. He was the first protestant of his family and a staunch supporter of the English interest. On the same day (9th of February, 1727), Dr. Trotter reported from the committee of the whole house, that they had gone through and agreed to the bill *with some amendments* (viz. the disfranchising clause) which were also read and agreed to, and Dr. Trotter was directed to attend the lord-lieutenant with the said heads of the bill to be transmitted into Great Britain in due form. 3 *Journ. Com.* p. 522. With such ease was a nation disfranchised by an unconstitutional minister!

which ended in May, 1728, went over without opposition : insomuch, that the lord-lieutenant, in closing the session, took an opportunity of observing *, that all the public bills transmitted from thence had been returned under the great seal of Great Britain ; which distinguishing instance of his Majesty's regard for the parliament of Ireland, was one of the happy effects of that remarkable application and unanimity, which had appeared in all their proceedings.

1729.

Ireland was entirely ruled by the principles of an English interest under Primate Boulter, who considered it strengthened by every additional pressure on the catholics. In the year 1733, an act was made for † preventing papists practising as solicitors ; which was the only branch of the law they were then permitted to practice. At the close of the session, the

Further rigorous imposed on the catholics.

* 3 Journ. Com. p. 570.

† 7 Geo. II. c. 5. Whilst this bill was pending, some catholics of Dublin and Cork set on foot a subscription to defray the expenses of opposing it : when one Hennesy, an interdicted priest, gave information, that this collection was made for the purpose of bringing in popery and the Pretender. Upon which the papers of these gentlemen were seized, and submitted to the inspection of the house of commons : and it appears from their printed report, that the whole sum collected had not exceeded 5*l.* : the committee however resolved, that it appeared to them, that under colour of opposing heads of bills, great sums of money had been collected and raised, and a fund established by the popish inhabitants of the kingdom, through the influence of their clergy, highly detrimental to the *protestant interest*, and of imminent danger to the present happy establishment : and therefore they resolved further, that an humble address should be presented to the lord-lieutenant to issue his proclamation to all magistrates to put the

1729. lord-lieutenant set forth, in the most glowing terms of congratulatory solace, “ the many signal marks of his Majesty’s goodness, who had nothing more at heart than the interest and prosperity of his people*.” He alluded to some of the most popular acts, such as the regulations made for future elections (*by abolishing the right of voting in four-fifths of the nation*), the erecting of churches, and augmenting the maintenance of the clergy, for preserving and strengthening the *protestant interest* of the kingdom.

Boulter’s
jealousy of
any Irish
influence.

Primate Boulter† was as zealous to prevent the growth of any Irish influence in Ireland, as of popery. On this ground he complained to the lord-lieutenant and Duke of Newcastle of the appointment of Mr. Allen Broderick, the chancellor’s son ‡, to be a com-
laws against popery into execution. *Cur. St. of the Catholics of Ireland*, p. 257. This circumstance goes to prove, that the clause for disfranchising the whole body of catholics was not in the heads of the bill, but furtively introduced to avoid opposition : or it is more than probable, that they would have instituted a collection to oppose a bill, that affected every individual of the body in so important a point, rather than a bill, which could not have affected threescore of their body.

* 3 Journ. Com. p. 570.

† Primate Boulter’s letters have disclosed more of the internal movements of the cabinet, than modern statesmen would wish to discover. In his letter to the Duke of Newcastle, three days after this session closed (vol. I. p. 242), he complains of the opposition of the bishop of Elphin (Theophilus Bolton promoted to the see of Cashell in 1729) whose view was to make himself considerable enough to *be bought off*. One part of the push he now made was to get all the lay lords here to confederate “ against the bishops, who must always be depended upon for doing the king’s business.”

‡ Allen Broderick (afterwards Lord Viscount Middleton) being

1730.

missioner of the customs in England. This was opposed by the primate. "We are," says he, "apprehensive it may give too much spirit to the Brodericks here, and be made use of by them to engage others to obstruct the King's business in parliament." The Earl of Clanrickarde had conformed to the established religion in the days of Queen Ann. He had made an application to the King to be restored to all, that had been forfeited by his ancestors, who had at all times been conspicuous for their loyalty and attachment to their sovereign; and the measure had been graciously assented to by his Majesty. But the reversion of so much landed influence into the hands of an Irish family, though protestant, was considered by the English interest in Ireland to contravene their system. Boulter procured an opposition in the commons, which completely defeated the benevolent intentions of the King. Yet, artfully to avoid wounding the feelings of the noble lord, by pointing at his particular case, they formed a resolution upon a broad principle, "that the reversal of outlawries of persons attainted of treason for the rebellions of 1641 or 1688, is greatly prejudicial to the protestant interest in this kingdom, and dangerous to his Majesty's person and the succession established in his royal house." They accordingly voted an address to his Majesty, setting forth the dangerous consequences of such misplaced

a staunch Whig, was appointed soon after the accession, viz. 1st Oct. 1714, to succeed Sir Constantine Phipps, the noted Tory chancellor of Ireland. He held the seals till the 1st of June, 1725.

1731.



Distresses
of Ireland
under Pri-
mate Boul-
ter.

indulgence, which had the effect of withholding his Majesty's benevolence *.

As the management of the English Interest in Ireland had been committed to Primate Boulter, although Lord Carteret continued lord-lieutenant till the year 1731, yet the kingdom was entirely governed by his Grace. Notwithstanding the catholics had been additionally aggrieved by new penal laws, which gave the death-blow to their civil existence, his greatest difficulty arose from the protestants of the north †. The primate, in his private, and therefore more sincere communications with the Duke of Newcastle, gave a most melancholy account of the state of the nation; complained of American agents seducing the people with prospects of happier establishments across the Atlantic; that 3100 had, in the preceding summer, been shipped off for the West-Indies, voluntarily encountering new miseries, to avoid the oppression they suffered at home. *The worst was, that it affected only protestants, and*

* The address is to be seen in my Historical Review, vol. I. 274. It displays no very pure idea of the loyalty of the addressers who tell their sovereign, that nothing can so effectually make them ready to support and defend his right and title to the crown, as the enjoyment of the forfeited estates of the papists. The address imports more of intimidation than attachment. The answer bespeaks a compliance of compulsion, not of inclination.

† The north was the most industrious, manufacturing, and opulent part of the kingdom, consequently the best suited to resist or avoid the distress and oppression, which the more wretched and impoverished parts of the kingdom were unable to avert.

reigned chiefly in the North*. His Grace sent to the lord-lieutenant the representation of the gentlemen of the North, and the opinion of their lawyers, as to what could be done by law to hinder people from going abroad: but that in those matters he should do nothing † without directions from his Majesty. Whatever could be done by law, it would be dangerous forcibly to hinder a number of needy people from quitting them. The distresses in the North were productive of tumults at Limerick, Cork, Waterford, Clonmel, and other places in the South, under pretence of preventing their corn from going to the North. The populace had broken open warehouses and cellars, and set what price they pleased on provisions.

1731.

Many causes, besides scarcity of corn, co-operated in producing discontents and consequent emigrations from the North. The dissenting ministers presented a memorial of several grievances of their brethren, chiefly relating to the oppression of the ecclesiastical courts about tithes, the whole of which his Grace denied or justified in a special letter to the Bishop of London ‡. They also complained of the

Grievances
of the dis-
senters.

* Sect. vol. I. 261.

† It has unfortunately been too frequent a practice of servants of the crown to push systems of unsound or corrupt policy to such a height, that they have been unable to check the evil consequences of their own conduct. The responsibility is then shifted from their own shoulders upon the king, whose personal interference cannot, by our constitution, cover the responsibility of his ministers.

‡ Vide the letter in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LVI.

1731.

sacramental test ; in relation to which his Grace told them, the laws were the same in England. The other grievances, which they mentioned were the raising of the rents unreasonably, the oppression of the justices of the peace, senechals, and other officers in the country. The primate himself was sensible of much discontent arising from the debts of the nation having been very much encreased within the last few years *.

Govern-
ment managed by
Primate
Boulter.

Lord Carteret was succeeded in the lieutenancy by the Duke of Dorset. They were both men of amiable private character. But their governments were entirely managed by the primate, in order to support an English interest in opposition to the native interest of Ireland. Under this prelate's management the patriots acquired so much strength, as to command a majority in the commons on a most important question. During the late administration the court-party had moved in the commons, that the fund, which had been provided for the payment of the national debt and interest, should be granted to his Majesty, his heirs, and successors for ever, redeemable by parliament. The patriots insisted, that it was unconstitutional and inconsistent with the public safety to grant it for a longer term than from session to session. An attempt was made by the court-party to vest it in the crown by continuing the supplies for twenty-one years ; but they lost the question by a single vote †.

* The progress of the national debt, and of the financial resources of Ireland, may be seen at large in my *Historical Review*, vol. I. p. 278, &c.

† This patriotic question was carried by the voice of Colonel

The Duke of Dorset, who was naturally humane, was the first lord-lieutenant for several years, who in addressing parliament, did not recommend from the throne to provide further severities against the catholics. He told them * that he should leave it to their consideration, whether any further laws might be necessary to prevent the growth of popery. At the opening of the parliament in 1733, he called upon them to secure a † *firm union amongst all protestants, who have one common interest, and the same common enemy.* This appears to have been preparatory to a measure of toleration, in favour of the protestant dissenters, which the Duke of Dorset had it in his instructions to propose. Boulter disapproving of the repeal of the test in favour of the dissenters, so exaggerated the threatened opposition to it, as to induce the British minister to drop the measure ‡. When the Duke of Dorset was about to

1733.

Duke of
Dorset's ad-
ministra-
tion.

Tottenham, member for New Ross, who had ridden post to town to be present at the debate, and arrived immediately before the house divided. The great supporter of the patriots at this time in Ireland, was Mr. Henry Boyle. Mr. Conolly, the speaker of the house of commons, died in 1730. Sir Ralph Gore succeeded him: but he did not fill the chair two years. Upon his death, in 1732, Mr. Boyle was elected to the honourable situation, which he filled with dignity and uprightness for many years. Sir Robert Walpole, though he ever looked upon Mr. Boyle with an envious eye, yet generally spoke of him in his facetious manner, as *the King of the Irish Commons.*

* 4 Journ. Com. p. 9.

† 4 Journ. Com. p. 70.

‡ That the reader may judge of the primate's earnestness to second these instructions from England, he is referred to his

1735.



quit the government of Ireland, he paid an honourable testimony to its loyalty*. “I think myself happy,” said he, “that on return to his Majesty’s royal presence, I can justly represent his people of Ireland, as most dutiful, loyal, and affectionate subjects.”

Abolition
of agist-
ment-tithe.

For two years was the government of Ireland in the hands of lords-justices headed by Primate Boulter. In 1735, the Duke of Dorset returned as lord-lieutenant. During his second viceroyalty an event happened, which, though seldom noticed, has been productive of the largest portion of the latter infelicity of Ireland. It furnishes an awful lesson to ministers, that timidity and insincerity are ever pregnant with the worst of consequences. An *English* ascendancy in Ireland was the idol, to which Primate Boulter rendered the whole system of his politics subservient. This he did not openly avow: but gave it the more specious denomination of *protestant ascendancy*: by which delusion he drew the greater part of the dissenters to second him in the one, who would have opposed him in the other. Every insincere or factious measure is easily analyzed into a principle of self-interest. The majority of the commons was disposed to depress the catholics: and still more inclined to evade payment of taxes to the state, or tithes to the church. They availed themselves of the power, and passed resolutions, formed upon the forced and confused peti-

Grace’s account of the transaction to the Duke of Newcastle, on the 18th Dec. 1733, in my *Historical Review*, p. 282.

* 4 Journ. Com. p. 152.

tions of several protestant land-owners, who threatened to emigrate to America, rather than pay tithe of agistment for barren cattle, that *the demand of tithe of agistment was new, grievous, and burthensome to the landlords and tenants; and that the other ecclesiastical dues and emoluments without that tithe, were an honourable and plentiful provision for the clergy of that kingdom. Upon these resolutions, they engrafted a motion, which they carried by a great majority †, that “the commencing suits upon these new demands must impair the protestant interest by driving many useful hands out of this kingdom; must disable those, that remain to support his Majesty’s establishment; and occasion popery and infidelity to gain ground by the contest, that must necessarily arise between the laity and the clergy.”

1736.

Boulter, in his communications with the English cabinet ‡ complained of this violent defalcation from the clergy’s profits. But he sacrificed even clerical emolument to the vicious system of keeping up an unnatural, unjust, and unwise ascendancy of the few over the bulk of the nation. So far was that demand new or illegal, that between the years 1722 and 1735, forty-two suits had been instituted in the Exchequer for the recovery of agistment-tithe; and in each of

Boulter yields to the loss of the clergy rather than hazard the English interest.

* 4 Com. Journ. 219.

† Viz. 110 to 50. Ib.

‡ Vide several letters on this subject to the Bishop of London, 18th May, 1736, and 10th May, 1737, to Sir Robert Walpole, 9th Aug. 1737, and al.

1736.

them, that went to a decree, the tithe was established. The primate permitted this resolution of the commons to pass upon the country for law, and thereby threw the payment of the most profitable tithe, from the richest land and the most opulent occupiers, upon the most barren soil and indigent cottiers. It was in the first instance a discouragement to tillage, and an effectual check to honest industry and labour. It has ever since been an unceasing source of distress, turbulence, and riot *.

* An identity of spirit in the government of Ireland, has continued this delusive principle, so pernicious to the established clergy, so indulgent to the class of occupiers the best able to pay, so oppressive to the part of the community the least able to bear the payment of any tithe, and so dangerous to the state, which is constitutionally bounden to maintain an established clergy. It will be a painful duty in the sequel to trace several most serious evils to the present pernicious system of tithing, as the events shall chronologically occur. It will not however be laid to the account of historical anachronism, if a circumstance be now referred to, which falls not within the scope of this history, in illustration of what it is the duty of the historian to retail. Since the union in 1801, which closes the period of this history, frequent notices and promises and menaces have been made in the imperial parliament of motions to improve the system of tithes in Ireland. In this session of parliament (1809), the Chancellor of the Exchequer has owned, that the difficulty of effectually improving the system of tithing has baffled his powers, and he must permit this session to pass like the last, without any proposal to heal the grievance, which he allows to exist. The party of the Ascendancy (call it *English*, *Protestant*, or any thing but *Irish* has retained from the days of Boulter an influence, which candour must allow has not been raised out of Irish patriotism. That party having devoted itself to the union, in the immediate contemplation

The Duke of Dorset was succeeded in the lieutenancy by the Duke of Devonshire, whose administration was the longest and most quiet of any, since the ac-

1737.

Admini-
stration of
the Duke
of Devon-
shire.

of which measure, and under conviction, that the imperial parliament never would convert the abused resolutions of the house of commons into the unchangeable law of the land, did in the year 1800, by way of prevention, pass an act to quiet and bar all claims of tithe-agistment for dry and barren cattle, (40 Geo. III. c. 23.), by which no such claim was allowed, or permitted to be prosecuted in any court civil or ecclesiastical, unless such agistment-tithe had been usually received within the last ten years. Thus was a real abuse of the resolutions of the house of commons, in 1735 made to supersede the law of the land, which no intermediate lapse of time could have extinguished; and the church's right to the agistment-tithe of the first grazing country in the known world, divested out of the rightful owners, for no other purpose than of gratifying a party, which had long occupied the power and profits of the state, to the oppression of the country at large. So lately as in the Lent Assizes for 1808, the grand jury of the most protestant county in Ireland (Armagh) considered the abuse of the present system of tithing as actually endangering the loyalty of the country. They accordingly came to the following resolution.

"We, the Grand Jury of the county of Armagh, assembled at Lent Assizes, 1808, see with much concern the exorbitant demands made by some of the clergy, and their proctors, in certain parishes in this county, in collecting of tithe, to the very great oppression of their parishioners, and tending, at this time in particular, to detach the minds of his Majesty's subjects from their loyalty, and attachment to the happy constitution of this country."

"Resolved, that our representatives be instructed to further with their decided support any measure, that may be brought forward in the imperial parliament for modifying and placing in some more equitable mode the payment of the clergy in this country."

1738.

cession of the Hanover family. His Grace was wholly devoted to the councils and influence of the primate, who died in that administration *. No lord-lieutenant, since the first Duke of Ormond, displayed such pomp, state, and luxury, as the Duke of Devonshire: no one ever applied so much of his personal patrimony to the gratification or advantage of the Irish nation: and upon the whole, his lieutenancy, without being brilliant, had the negative merit of not having been turbulent. As persecution was agreeable neither to George the Second, nor to his favourite minister Sir Robert Walpole, the catholics of Ireland enjoyed some few years of relative indulgence, which was ill relished by the primate †. In his ideas it had produced so much insolence in that body, and so general a disposition amongst protestants and papists to insult magistrates for doing their duty, that they thought it proper, for preserving the peace of the country, to prosecute any person *indifferently*, that demanded satisfaction of any magistrate for putting the laws into execution ‡.

* 4 Journ. Com. p. 152.

† The editor of Boulter's Letters assures us, that such a malignant spirit had been raised about this period by Dean Swift and the Irish bankers, that it was thought proper to lodge at the primate's house an extraordinary guard of soldiers: and, by a singular combination of heterogeneous interests, the primate attributed an opposition to the English cabinet in Ireland to the art of the Dean, the management of the bankers, and the whole popish party there.

‡ Letter to the Duke of Devonshire, vol. II. p. 227. What idea is to be formed of the government of that country, in which the

The cries against popery at this time arose principally from self-interest. Lord Clancarty had obtained the consent of the British cabinet, that a bill should be brought into the Irish parliament to reverse his attainder for having adhered to King James in 1688. His forfeited estates were, according to Primate Boulter, then of the annual value of 60,000*l*. The report of that measure, and reflection upon the consequences of such a precedent threw the protestant landholders into the greatest alarm and fermentation *. It sharpened the edge of the law, and increased the acrimony of the Irish government against the catholics, notwithstanding their unshaken loyalty and exemplary conduct. This appears from the resolutions of the commons at the end of the year 1739†; which were stronger than those affecting Lord Clanrickarde: an evident proof, that there was a powerful interest in Ireland not in unison with the British cabinet. The former prevailed on this occasion as on many others, and the attainder of Lord Clancarty was not reversed ‡.

1739.

Variance of
English
and Irish
cabinet.

first minister of national justice makes a desperate and forced threat of administering it *indifferently for the peace of the country* ?

* 2 Boulter, p. 152.

† 1 Journ. Com. p. 336. These resolutions are given in my Historical Review, vol. I. 288.

‡ This nobleman sensibly resented the irresolution of the English ministry in not carrying into effect their promises and engagements for passing this measure. On this account M'Allister says, (Let. p. 15), " Lord Clancarty considering himself ill used by the ministry of England, readily attended the summons of

1743.

Relaxation
in favour of
the catho-
lics. Their
unshaken
loyalty.

The personal feelings of the Sovereign, the political views of the English ministry, and the humane disposition of the Duke of Devonshire produced some relaxation in the execution of the laws against the catholics. The British government, in defiance of those very laws, condescended to recruit both the army and navy in Ireland, though with more secrecy, than the recruiting service for the old Pretender had been carried on in the last years of Queen Ann. In the year 1745, under the administration of Mr. Pelham, who had succeeded Sir Robert Walpole, the British government was greatly embarrassed by the loss of the noted battle of Fontenoy, and the simultaneous landing of the young chevalier in the North of Scotland. There then existed a corps of British Jacobites, consisting of seven regiments of Irish, and two of Scots *, in the pay of the French monarch, who considered themselves as auxiliary troops of James Stuart, whom they acknowledged as the rightful monarch of these realms. Although frequent intercourse must have subsisted between those, who served the exiled prince

the old chevalier to prepare for the intended invasion of Great Britain in 1745. He sought any occasion for procuring to himself the prospect of possessing that great fortune, and would have joined the Grand Turk or Cham of Tartary to obtain it."

* The six Irish regiments of foot, were *Dillon, Clare, Berwick, Roscommon, Lally, Bulkely*; and *Fitzjames's* horse: the Scots, were the *Royal Scots* horse, and *Ogilvie's* foot. Three of these regiments were at the battle of Fontenoy, and claimed the merit of turning the fortune of that day in favour of the French: on which occasion, George the Second is reported to have said, with unusual emotion, *cursed be the laws, which deprive me of such subjects.*

at St. Gèrmain's or in this brigade, and their relatives in Ireland, yet so pure was the loyalty of the great body of Irish in this moment of trial, that not even a suspicion of their rising in the cause of the Pretender was harboured or acted upon.

1745.



Fortunately for Ireland, the Earl of Chesterfield* was appointed to the lieutenancy in this critical moment. Nothing could exceed the coolness, moderation, and wisdom of his conduct on this trying occasion†. He had for-

Earl of
Chesterfield
appointed
lord-lieute-
nant.

* Before this prudent governor had assumed the reins of the Irish government, the usual means of alarming and irritating the public mind from the senate, bench, and pulpit had been so effectually pursued, that upon the report of Marshal Saxe's intention to make a descent upon England, a serious proposal had been made in council, that as the papists had begun the massacre on the protestants in 1641, it was but just and reasonable in that critical juncture to retaliate in like manner upon the papists. Although this barbarous proposal were indignantly rejected by that honourable assembly, to which it was proposed, yet was it the enthusiastic conviction of some of the lower orders of the protestant inhabitants of Iargan, that such a horrid conspiracy was actually entered into: although it were by providential accident prevented from the discovery of a respectable merchant of Dublin, who happened to be there upon his commercial concerns.

† Every act of this excellent governor differed from those of all his predecessors, and unfortunately too of most of his successors. Before he left England, he chose for principal secretary, Mr. Lyddel, who was, as he says in a letter to his son, *a very genteel pretty young fellow, but not a man of business*: which circumstance determined his choice. His lordship told him, "Sir, you will receive the emoluments of your place, but I will do the business myself, being determined to have no first minister." His lordship owed his appointment, not to court favour, (George the

1745. } fortunately been entrusted with a plenitude of discretion : and the gratitude of the Irish for the judicious and prudent use of his extraordinary powers, has not even to this day been effaced from the lowest of their peasantry. Gratitude has ever a strong hold upon the Irish nation. It required indeed the eminent sagacity and address of that nobleman, to baffle the efforts and importunities of the violent party in Ireland, with which they daily assailed the castle, and demanded rigour and severity against the catholics, as the just tribute to the protestant interest, and the only means of supporting the establishment. By the temperate wisdom of this government during the rebellion in Great Britain *, not a single Irish Catholic, lay or clerical, was engaged, or even accused of being engaged, in that cause †.

Second disliked him much) but to state necessity. He had experience, sense, and principle, and he acted up to them.

* The Pretender landed in the summer of 1745, on one of the Hebrides, and on the 19th of August, the Marquis of Tullibardine erected his standard at Glensinnan: on the 16th day of April, 1746, the battle of Culloden was won by the Duke of Cumberland, which properly put an end to that rebellion.

† This fact is fully proved by Dr. Curry, (*vol. II. p. 261, Dub. Ed. 1793.*) “ In the year 1762, upon a debate in the house of lords about the expediency of raising five regiments of these catholics, for the service of the King of Portugal, Doctor Stone (then primate), in an answer to some common-place objections against the good faith and loyalty of these people, which were revived with virulence on that occasion, declared publicly in the house of lords, that in the year 1747, after that rebellion was

When Lord Chesterfield met the parliament on the 8th of October, his speech to them bespoke the wisdom of his conduct : he addressed himself to a feeling people, with the authority of a ruler, and with the affection of a father.

1746.

Lord Chesterfield meets the parliament.

* On the same day, both lords and commons resolved on an address of thanks to his Majesty, for placing over them, at that critical juncture, a governor of such eminent abilities and distinguished merit.

Address of thanks to the throne.

The earl of Chesterfield, confiding in the steady loyalty of the Irish people, instead of increasing, as

Prudent and upright conduct of Lord Chesterfield.

entirely suppressed, happening to be in England, he had an opportunity of perusing all the papers of the rebels and their correspondents, which were seized in the custody of Murray, the Pretender's secretary; and that after having spent much time, and taken great pains in examining them (not without some share of the then common suspicion, that there might be some private understanding and intercourse between them and the Irish catholics) he could not discover the least trace, hint, or intimation of such intercourse or correspondence in them, or of any of the letters favouring, or abetting, or having been so much as made acquainted with the designs or proceedings of these rebels; and what he said he wondered at most of all was, that in all his researches, he had not met with any passage in any of these papers, from which he could infer, that either their holy father the pope, or any of his cardinals, bishops, or other dignitaries of that church, or any of the Irish clergy, had, either directly or indirectly, encouraged, aided, or approved of the commencing or carrying on of that rebellion." The like honourable testimony of Irish loyalty on this occasion appears in the charge given to the grand juries of the city and county of Dublin, by the Lord Chief Justice Marlay, for which see my Hist. Review, vol. I. p. 294.

* 2 Lords' Journ. p. 591.

1746.

he was importunately advised, the army by 4000 men, sent four battalions to the assistance of the Duke of Cumberland, and encouraged volunteer associations to form in different parts of the kingdom for the defence of their country. These battalions he replaced by additional companies to the regiments already on the establishment, without increasing the expenditure of the nation, the influence of the crown, or his own patronage or emolument. The supply asked for was small : it was raised with ease, and expended with economy : a considerable saving out of it was applied to the improvement of the harbour of Cork. He rested the support of his measures upon their rectitude, and chastely abstained from gaining friends by the customary modes of reversionary grants. He opened to the catholics their places of worship, released their priests out of prison, and allowed them the undisturbed exercise of their religious duties. This great statesman well knew, that the Irish above all other people, were to be gained and secured by confidence, kindness, and liberality. Thus protestants and catholics, whigs and tories, courtiers and patriots, convinced of the rectitude of his measures, united in contributing to render his government agreeable and efficient. Neither in nor out of parliament was a single measure of this excellent governor opposed or disrelished.

Addressed
by the lords
and com-
mons.

The lords and commons, in several addresses to the lord-lieutenant, expressed their sense of his Majesty's favour and goodness towards Ireland in sparing from his councils in Great Britain a person of his

1746.

excellency's known and tried abilities for the good and advantage of their nation. The commons were more tardy in expressing their sentiments to the viceroy, though their address, which was made on the 5th of April, 1746, were more pointed, as being founded in the happy experience, and not in the anticipated confidence of his administration. The Earl of Chesterfield had the satisfaction of seeing all his attempts to serve the kingdom he was sent to govern, requited by the most peaceful demeanour and enthusiastic gratitude of the Irish nation. He was universally admired on his arrival, beloved during his stay, and regretted upon his departure. To perpetuate his virtues and the gratitude of the nation, his bust was placed in the castle of Dublin at the public expense.

The short administration of the earl of Chesterfield furnishes reflections highly important to the welfare of the Irish nation. It was a practical demonstration of the utility of a system of liberality, not only to Ireland, but to the whole British empire. It was conclusive evidence, that Great Britain well knew how at any time to ensure the happiness of her sister kingdom, though unwilling at most times to promote it. Fear drove Great Britain to do justice to Ireland for some months of danger. So thriftily did Great Britain deal out this transient justice to Ireland, that she appeared to count reluctantly the hours of its enjoyment. On the 19th of August, 1745, the standard of rebellion was formally erected in the Highlands of Scotland: a courier was dispatched to hasten the return of the King, who was then in Hanover: he arrived in Lon-

Reflections
upon the
short dura-
tion of Lord
Chester-
field's ad-
ministra-
tion.

1746.

don before the end of August: on the 31st day of August, the Earl of Chesterfield was appointed lord-lieutenant and chief governor of Ireland. On the 16th of April, 1746, the defeat of the Pretender at Culloden by the Duke of Cumberland put an end to the rebellion; on the ninth day after that event, Ireland was deprived of her favourite viceroy; for on the 25th of April, 1746, Primate Hoadley, Lord-chancellor Newport, and Mr. Boyle, the speaker of the house of commons, were appointed lords-justices, and vainly did Ireland sigh for the return of her short-lived felicity. Great Britain was out of danger; and Ireland could securely be put again under its former regime. In order effectually to cut off all hopes of the return of Lord Chesterfield to Ireland, on the 13th of September the Earl of Harrington was appointed the new lord-lieutenant.

Earl of Harrington lord-lieutenant.

This is the period of Irish history, at which Mr. Burke observed*, “the English in Ireland began to be domiciliated, and to recollect, that they had a country.” The English interest at first by faint and almost insensible degrees, but at length openly and avowedly, became an independent Irish interest, full as independent, as it could ever have been, if it had continued in the persons of the native Irish. The new lord-lieutenant, when he met the parliament in October, 1747, particularly complimented them on his Majesty’s continuance of his paternal regard and affection to a dutiful and loyal people; and recommended a

* Letter to Lang. p. 45.

continuance of the same good conduct and vigilance, which, under God, had prevented the communication of so dangerous an infection (i. e. the Scotch rebellion) to that kingdom.

1747.



The agitation of a political question about this time brought into notice Mr. Lucas, a medical gentleman, from Cork, who, on a vacancy in the representation of the city of Dublin, proposed himself on the patriotic interest. He had for some time attacked the abuses, by which the commons had been deprived of the power of choosing the city magistrates, and that power had been placed in the board of aldermen, subject to the approbation of the lord-lieutenant. This question raised a flaming contest for civil liberty between the patriots and government*. Mr. James Digges Latouche, who had formerly been an intimate friend of Mr. Lucas, and strongly united with him in political principles, on this occasion abandoned them, and proposed himself as a candidate for the city of Dublin, in opposition to Mr. Lucas, then the popular idol of such of the nation, as took the liveliest concern in the politics of the day. The firmness and perspicuity of his speeches to the different corporations, his political publications, the popularity of his subject, and (perhaps) the justice of his arguments, alarmed the Irish government, which had been little used to such opposition. They determined to crush him by the hand of power. Certain passages were collected from his writings, and made

The patriot-
ism of Mr.
Lucas.

* The particulars of the several publications and nature of this civil discord may be seen in my *Historical Review*, vol. I. p. 301, *et seq.*

1747.

the foundation of a charge brought against him before parliament. The rights of the commons, which with particular attention he had laboured to vindicate and ascertain, had been one of the subjects of his free discussion. Instead of protecting him in reward of this service, so essential to Ireland, the majority of that house listened to the charge, voted him an enemy to his country, and addressed the lord-lieutenant to order him to be prosecuted by his Majesty's attorney-general*. The favour of the public was not sufficient to defend him against the hand of power. To avoid the storm, Mr. Lucas fled from Ireland. After he had spent some time in banishment, the turn of fortune placed him once more in an honourable situation. The exertions of his friends rose superior to the influence, by which he had been oppressed. Upon a new vacancy, he returned to Dublin, and was elected one of the representatives of that city in parliament. The purest patriotism and the firmest and most disinterested exertions in behalf of the constitution, invariably distinguished his conduct in and out of parliament to the day of his death.

Primate
Stone entrusted with
the management of the
English interest in Ire-
land.

The spirit of civil freedom had now become so prevalent in Ireland, that the English interest could no longer be carried on with that systematic facility with which it had been managed by Primate Boulton.

* Mr. Lucas's writings or arguments are collected in two closely printed volumes in octavo. A very explicit and candid profession of his political faith, is comprised in his Address to the Earl of Harrington, on the 3d of October, 1749, which is to be seen in the Appendix, No. LVII. to my Historical Review.

1747.

Upon the death of Primate Hoadley*, in 1747, the person, to whom this interest was committed was George Stone, then Bishop of Derry. He had ingratiated himself with the castle by a most zealous opposition to the Irish interest. Immediately upon his translation to the see of Armagh, he was put at the head of the commission, with the chancellor and speaker as lords-justices. This prelate was a man of talent, of a lofty and arrogant disposition; resolute and determined; a thorough-paced courtier; and too determinately devoted to politics to be attentive to his pastoral duties†. At the head of those, who opposed

* He succeeded Boulter in 1741.

† Primate Stone was lavish of favours to his creatures, and had therefore many supporters: he was too haughty and dictatorial not to have many enemies. His grandfather had been gaoler at Winchester: his perquisites in that situation had enabled his son (the primate's father) to become a banker: he was a nonjuror, and his chief customers were the Jacobites. He was in the flower of youth when promoted to the primacy; to which none before him had been raised till on the decline of life. His person was uncommonly handsome; whence he was called *the beauty of Holiness*. He was inordinate in his ambition, intemperate in his passions, and inexorable in his resentments. Like his predecessor Boulter, he was invested with the arduous charge of marshalling the *English interest*, or, according to the more specious phrase, of *doing the King's* (in fact the minister's) *business*. His entertainments had all the attractions of the most voluptuous refinement. His courtesy, affability, and hospitality gained him many abettors, and his efforts to gain proselytes in parliament were indefatigable. Yet the number of his enemies is a strong presumption, that the charges against him were not altogether groundless. For the honour of the prelacy, we forbear to retail his enemies' account of his conduct.

1748.

him was his colleague in the commission Mr. Boyle, the speaker of the house of commons. The late lord Clare has left us a faithful portrait of this prelate's administration.

Lord Clare's
representation
of Primate
Stone's
administra-
tion.

* " After the treaty of Aix-la-Chappelle, the trade of this country had so increased, that the hereditary revenue was amply sufficient for every public service, and a considerable surplus remained in the exchequer, after defraying every charge upon it; so that in effect the crown was little, if at all dependent on parliament for support: and it is difficult to say how long this oligarchy might have kept its ground, if the intrigues of the ambitious ecclesiastic, then at the head of the Irish church, had not laid the foundation of party heat and animosities, which have long disturbed and degraded our parliamentary proceedings. The great trial of strength between the primate and the then speaker of the house of commons was made in 1753, when a bill was proposed for applying the surplus then in the exchequer to pay a public debt, which had been some time before contracted. The courtiers of that day, ranged under the ecclesiastical banner, contended that this surplus belonged to the crown; and, therefore, that the King's previous assent to its application ought to be signified before the commons could appro-

* Speech, on the 10th of February, 1800, p. 27. Lord Clare was invested with a commission to manage the English, or protestant, or castle influence in Ireland, not unlike to that of primate Stone. And posterity will probably hold forth the conduct of that imperious chancellor and statesman, much as the chancellor has represented the primate's.

1748.



priate it. The patriots, ranged under the speaker's banner, insisted that no such assent was necessary, and beat their political adversaries by a small majority. Heads of a bill for the appropriation passed the commons without taking notice of the King's previous assent to it. They were rejected by the crown, and the surplus was applied by the royal authority, without the intervention of parliament. But the commons took effectual care, that the question should not occur a second time, by appropriating every future surplus to their private use, under the specious pretence of local public improvements. Wind-mills and water-mills, and canals, and bridges, and spinning jennies, were provided at the public expense; and the parliamentary patrons of these great national objects were entrusted with full discretionary powers over the money granted to complete them. From this system of local improvement, a double advantage arose to the Irish aristocracy: it kept their followers steady in the ranks, and by reducing the crown to the necessity of calling for the supplies, made the political services of the leaders necessary for the support of the King's government. But the precedent was fatal, and a system has gradually been built upon it, which would beat down the most powerful nation of the earth."

It had been the invariable usage, as it was the duty of the commons, since the revolution, to superintend the expenditure of the annual supplies, and to dispose of the surplus without the consent of the sovereign: accordingly in the year 1749 they prepared a bill with

Contest between the Irish commons and English cabinet, as to the appropriation of surplus.

1749.

a preamble, recommending, without any reference to the royal consent, "that the unapplied residue on the 25th of March should be paid in discharge of part of the national debt." This assumption of right in the commons to apply the unappropriated surplus without the previous consent of the crown, gave great offence to the British cabinet, which instructed the Duke of Dorset, who had returned lord-lieutenant, to assure the parliament*, that he was commanded by the King to acquaint them, that his Majesty, ever attentive to the ease and happiness of his subjects, would graciously consent to and recommend such appropriation. This declaration alarmed the commons, as an attempt upon their privileges. In their address of thanks, which is usually but an echo of the King's speech, they studiously omitted to notice the consent of the crown; as they also did in the preamble of the bill for appropriating 120,000*l.* surplus in discharge of the national debt. This omission was resented by the English ministry, as a direct attack upon the prerogative. The bill was sent back amended by the insertion of his Majesty's consent, as well as his recommendation. They then passed it even without debate.

Nevil, a member of the house of commons, found guilty of peculation.

The patriots in the Commons grew daily more tenacious of their duty, and had been for some time engaged in investigating the embezzlement of public money by Mr. Nevil, one of their own house, surveyor and engineer general, who was found guilty of

* 5 Journ. Com. p. 91.

1751.

the grossest peculation, embezzlement, and fraud in his management of and contracts for the barracks*. Such abuses had been long complained of; but till the patriots had acquired sufficient strength to raise an effectual opposition to the Anglo-Irish government, all addresses, remonstrances, and efforts for redress had but aggravated the evil, whilst the state delinquents were shielded by that factitious majority, which it was the boasted policy of those times to support, under the appellation of an *English interest*. Having succeeded in convicting Mr. Nevil to the extent of their charge†, they reserved themselves to make fresh head against this encroachment of the crown upon their own privileges and right of raising and applying the surplus of the national revenue.

The Duke of Dorset was sent a second time to assume the government of Ireland, in expectation, that the popularity he had gained in his first administration, would enable him to stem the progress of patriotism, which more perhaps from the popularity of Lucas, and the disgrace of Nevil, than from its intrinsic powers had become highly alarming to the English cabinet. That nobleman was remarkable for his suavity of manners; when formerly governor, he had not a personal enemy, and was really friendly to the welfare of Ireland. Upon his second arrival, he

Duke of Dorset's second lieutenancy.

* For the different reports and resolutions against him, vide 5 Com. Journ. passim.

† Mr. Nevil was afterwards expelled the house, and his name ordered to be expunged out of the list. 5 Journ. Com. p. 165.

1752.



was received with the joy and gratitude of a nation, which had long regretted his absence. The change of the public disposition towards his grace was as sudden, as his devotion to the *English interest* was determined. Primate Stone, at whose nod the whole Irish government moved, was execrated by the country at large ; Lord George Sackville, the lord-lieutenant's son and secretary, gave general offence to the nation by the loftiness of his carriage : he was disdainful and impetuous : and though eloquent, was often petulant and generally sarcastic in his language. The patriots complained loudly, that under these two, namely, an English Archbishop, (no very staunch model of morality or virtue) and a young supercilious boy, giddy and intoxicated with power, the Irish nation was governed without control. The duke was considered as the mere passive tool of government. Though he had no enemies to his person, he found a host against his government.

Triumph of
the Patriots
over the go-
vernment
and its ar-
rogance.

Again was the contest about the right of appropriating the surplus of the revenue revived, and the former experiments resorted to. The bill containing the amendments from England, which imported the Royal consent, went to the votes *, and was rejected

* The violent proceedings, which followed this rejection of the bill, threw the nation into a flame. The degraded members of the patriots exalted by their disgrace, became the idols of the people, and were worshipped as martyrs for the liberties of their country. In this temper it was hazardous to suffer the commons, who had been adjourned for a few days, to meet. The parliament was suddenly prorogued, and several bills equally necessary to the crown as to the

1753.



by a majority of five voices. The success of their endeavours was celebrated with the most extravagant rejoicings, as a triumph of patriotism over the arts of ministerial corruption ; and on the other hand, all the servants of the crown, who had joined the popular cry on this occasion, were dismissed from their employments. The rejection of the bill was a great disappointment to the creditors of the public, and the circulation of cash suffered a general stagnation.

In this contest for constitutional rights, the Earl of Kildare was prominently conspicuous. He as well as the most considerable men of fortune in Ireland, who were not under some special tie or obligation to government, sided with the patriots. It was industriously circulated from the castle, that the majority of the house of commons was a *Popish and Jacobitical* party,

Memorial
of the Earl
of Kildare.

subject, fell to the ground. The primate, who was considered as the author of all these measures, despairing to gain the affections of the people, determined to awe them into submission by others still more violent. He urged the Duke of Dorset to remove from their employments not only all, who opposed him, but those, whom he suspected to have any connection with the opposite party. The duke had not vigor of mind for such an undertaking. He dreaded the tumults of the people. Every shout of the mob threw him into panics ; and this being known, they left him not one moment's repose. To rid himself of importunities, he promised the primate, that upon his return to England, he would do every thing he could desire. The duke under the protection of a military guard and of a mob hired and made drunk for the purpose by a man, who was largely rewarded for that service by a pension on the public establishment, made his escape out of the kingdom. The primate, who was continued in the government, in vain employed menace and promise to break the party.

1756.

endeavouring to destroy the royal prerogatives, in order to pave the way to his majesty's expulsion from the throne. Such undoubtedly were they represented to the English ministry. Under these circumstances, the Earl of Kildare presented with his own hand a most spirited memorial* to the king, in which, after referring to the hereditary loyalty of his family from the days of Henry II. he assured his majesty, that he was the rather induced to lay that memorial at his feet, as it was on good presumption surmised, that all access to his royal ear was shut up, and his liege subjects debarred the liberty of complaining: that as no notice had been taken of several remonstrances lately made by his majesty's liege subjects, it was humbly presumed, that such remonstrances had been stopped in their progress to the royal ear: that he ventured on that bold step at the request of thousands: that in general the face of his loyal kingdom of Ireland wore discontent: a discontent not coloured from caprice or faction, but purely founded on ministerial abuse. This strong, though necessary measure of the Earl of Kildare gave great offence and some alarm to the British cabinet, though they affected to treat it as an act of folly and temerity, which nothing but the extreme mildness of government would permit to pass unpunished.†

Effect of
Lord Kil-
dare's Me-
morial.

The distressed situation of Ireland roused that illus-

* It may be seen in the Appendix to my Hist. Rev. No. LVIII.

† This is manifested by the correspondence between the Duke of Dorset and Lord Holderness, whose letters may be seen in my Historical Review, vol. I. 315.

trious patriot, who reflected honour on nobility, to appeal to the sovereign to open the channel of communication between his Majesty and his Irish subjects, which had been so long obstructed by the machinations of corrupt ministers. If the measure were without a precedent, so was the occasion that made it necessary. The good of the country was at once its motive and its justification; and the rage and violence it excited evinced the shock it was to the *English interest*. It did not however lose its effect upon the king. The popular clamour became so loud, that government was terrified into a change of measures. The speaker of the house of commons was promoted to the dignity of an earl*: and several other patriots accepted of lucrative employments. Primate Stone, who had been the chief fomentor of the late disturbances, was by his majesty's command stricken off the list of privy counsellors, and most of those, who, by his intrigues had been displaced for voting for the money bill, were reinstated with honor. The Marquis of Hartington, afterwards Duke of Devonshire, went over as lord-lieutenant. Upon his return to England in 1756, Lord Chancellor Jocelyn and the Earls of Kildare and Besborough were appointed lord-justices. Much of the popular ferment now subsided, and the kingdom once more resumed the appearance of tranquillity.

1756.

The cause of patriotism was strengthened, not

Insincerity
of many of
the Patriots.

* Viz. Of Shannon: he had also a pension of 2000l. per ann. for 31 years. There was much intrigue in bringing about these changes in Ireland, which may be seen in my *Historical Review*, vol. I. 314. &c.

1756. established by the late appointments. A trial of self-interest proved several of them recreant from the cause of freedom, in which they had recently enlisted. The commons, in a committee of the whole house, took into consideration the heads of a most wholesome bill to secure the freedom of parliament, by vacating the seats of such members, as should accept of any pension or civil office of profit from the crown : which upon a division was negatived by a majority of 26*.

The patriots rally and carry an important question.

The patriots rallied successfully upon a most important question, namely, whether the representative body of the nation should be deprived by any ministerial influence from carrying national grievances up to the throne? On this occasion the firm zeal of Mr. John Ponsonby, the speaker, cannot be over-rated.

Unsatisfactory answer to the commons.

Several strong resolutions of the committee appointed to inspect the public accounts of the nation were reported to the house, which resolved, that the house, with its speaker, should attend the lord-lieutenant, with the resolutions, and desire his grace would be pleased to lay them before his Majesty as the sense of that house. When his excellency was attended by

* 3 Journ. Com. p. 38. On the day of this debate a list of the pensions granted upon the civil establishment of Ireland was according to order given in to the house : it amounted to 44,393l. 15s. and is to be seen in the appendix to that volume of the Journals CCXCVI. In this list of pensioners are to be read many of the first names of Ireland, many foreigners, and few or no meritorious servants of the public. The Countess of Yarmouth stood upon it for 4000l.

1757.

the speaker to know when the resolutions would be laid before his Majesty, the following unsatisfactory answer was given. "The matter contained in those resolutions is of so high a nature, that I cannot suddenly determine, whether it be proper for me to transmit them to his Majesty." On the speaker's reporting the answer, Mr. Secretary moved, that it should be entered in the journal of the house as explicit and satisfactory. After debate, and the question put, Mr. Secretary apprehending a majority against the motion, withdrew it, which prevented a division. But upon the grand debate for suppressing the resolutions, and preventing national grievances being laid before the throne, the question was carried against the minister by a majority of twenty-one. The house having been afterwards assured that the lord-lieutenant would forthwith transmit their resolutions to his Majesty, they proceeded to business; and passed the money bill unanimously on the same day.*

The Duke of Bedford, who was appointed lord-lieutenant in the year 1757, was the first chief governor of Ireland, who openly professed a favourable disposition to the Catholics. To him must be allowed the credit of having restored suspended animation to the members of that paralyzed body. Heads of a registry bill, prepared under the late administration of Ireland, which was intended as a severe penal law

Administra-
tion of the
Duke of
Bedford fa-
vourable to
the Catho-
lics.

* As matter of historical curiosity a list of the gentlemen who divided upon these resolutions, which was one of the first triumphs of Patriotism in Ireland, is given in the Appendix, No. LIX. to my *Historical Review*.

1759. upon the Catholics, were handed about, and created much alarm in that body *. Their fears drove them to consultation, and consultation animated them to action: a common sense of the existing and fear of additional severities taught them, that the surest means of preventing fresh laws from being enacted would be to make some vigorous exertion for the repeal of those, by which they were most galled. They held frequent meetings, in which there was much diversity of opinion. They failed from want of concert among themselves.

Private occurrences
occasion
national ferment.

Some incidental occurrences gave rise to much public menace, and some additional severity in executing the laws. A young lady of the name of Toole being strongly importuned by some of her relations to conform to the established religion, had taken refuge in the house of a Mr. Saul, a catholic merchant in Dublin. The affair was taken up with a high hand. Mr. Saul was prosecuted, and publicly assured from the bench, *that the laws did not presume a Papist to exist in the kingdom, nor could they breathe without the connivance of government* †. The publication about

* Mr. Charles O'Connor of Ballenagare, the celebrated Irish scholar and antiquary, was one of the most active of the Catholics. His letter to Dr. Curry on this occasion, which is to be seen in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LXXI. will let the reader into the spirit of the sense and feeling of the gentlemen of that persuasion at that period. The nature and result of their conduct may be seen in my Historical Review, 320, &c.

† Mr. Saul's letter to Mr. O'Connor upon this subject, dated November the 15th, 1759, gives an interesting account of this

the same time of Dr. Curry's *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Rebellion of 1641** though anonymously, awakened the attention of all, and sharpened the rigour of many towards the catholics. So little had the public been then accustomed to the voice of truth upon these subjects, that the book, though dispassionate and unanswerable, raised an alarming ferment in the minds of most of the Protestants.


1759.

When the Duke of Bedford met the parliament in 1759, he apprized them, that by a letter from Mr. Secretary Pitt, written by his Majesty's express command, it appeared that France, following up her plan of invasion, would, if able to elude the British squadron, make Ireland their first object. He had therefore but to animate the loyal people of Ireland to exert their well-known zeal and spirit in support of his Majesty's government, and in defence of all that was dear to them. The commons assured his grace that the house would make good whatever expense should be necessarily incurred by pursuing the most speedy and effectual means to frustrate and defeat the

Alarm of French invasion, and its consequences.

transaction, and of its consequences to Mr. Saul, whom it drove out of the kingdom. His family has been ever since settled in France. The letter is in my *Historical Review*, Appendix, No. LXIII. The original is in Mr. O'Connor's collection, and now probably in the library of Stowe with the rest of that collection.

* The Memoirs were published with great secrecy and caution. The motives and reasons for their publication will best appear from the correspondence between Dr. Curry and Mr Charles O'Connor upon the subject, in the Appendix to my *Historical Review*, No. LXIV. The original letters once were in the O'Connor collection.

1759.  attempts of the enemy. The first impressions of this communication produced such distractions among the people, as had nearly proved fatal to the public credit. In the first transports of popular fear, there was such an extraordinary run upon the banks of Dublin, that several considerable bankers were obliged to stop payment. Circulation was suspended for a time. When the lord-lieutenant, the members of both houses of parliament, the lord mayor, aldermen, merchants, and principal traders of Dublin, by prudently engaging in an association to support public credit, by taking bankers notes in payment, revived it, and saved the nation from bankruptcy.

The catho-
lics address
govern-
ment on
the alarm
of invasion.

Amongst other delusive motives, which at this time actuated the unwise councils of Versailles, in hazarding this rash invasion of Ireland, were the false hopes holden out to them by some of the expatriated Irish in the service of France, that an invading army would have been immediately joined by the physical force of the country. On the first alarm however of invasion Mr. O'Connor and Dr. Curry called a meeting of the Catholic committee, for the purpose of making a tender of their allegiance to government. Mr. O'Connor drew up the form of an address on 1st of December, 1759; and on the ensuing day, at a meeting of the most respectable merchants in Dublin, it was signed by about 300 persons, and presented to the speaker of the house of commons, to be forwarded by him to the lord-lieutenant. It was received without observation, and laid on the table. No direct answer was given from the castle. Some days elapsed in mysterious

silence. On the 10th of December his grace gave a most gracious answer to the address, which appeared in the Dublin Gazette on the 15th of December, 1759.* The speaker sent for Mr. Anthony M'Dermott as the delegate from the catholic body, and having by order read the address, the speaker replied, that he counted it a favour done him to be put in the way of serving so respectable a body, as that of the gentlemen, who had signed that loyal address. The acceptance of this address was the re-admission of the catholic body over the threshold of their constitutional rights†. Immediately upon the circulation of the gracious acceptance of this address, the catholics poured in addresses upon the castle, from every quarter of the kingdom, expressive of their loyalty and zeal for their king and country.

1759.

It has been credibly asserted, that one strong motive for this favourable disposition to the catholics was to dispose that body to an Union with Great Britain, which had then been crudely thought of. It was the

Project of
an Union
creates a
disturbance

* The address and the Duke of Bedford's answer are to be seen in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LXV,

† Notwithstanding the successful result of this address, it is to be remarked, that a most determined, and not altogether temperate dissension of the Catholic body took place, upon its propriety. The clergy, nobility, and landed interest were anti-addressers: their fears or hopes, or expectancies from the castle convinced them, that as Catholics were not subjects in the eye of the law, it would be presumption to address; and they only could express their obedience by letter. Fortunately for Ireland, this pusillanimous delicacy of the anti-addressers was overruled by the sound sense and policy of Mr. O'Connor and Dr. Curry.

1759. obvious interest of the managers of the Irish Government then to oppose it, and they secretly instigated the mob against it, without appearing to take any part in the opposition. The measure was effectually strangled in embryo. The people was then taught or permitted to view prospectively in union, the deprivation of its parliament and independency, and the probable subjection to the same taxes that were levied in England. These notions inflamed the populace to such a degree, that they assembled in a prodigious multitude, broke into the house of lords, insulted the peers, seated an old woman on the throne, and searched for the Journals, which, had they been found, would have been committed to the flames. They compelled the members of both houses, whom they met in the streets, to take an oath, that they would never consent to such an union, or give any vote contrary to the true interest of Ireland. Divers coaches belonging to obnoxious persons were destroyed, and their horses killed; a gibbet was erected for one gentleman in particular, who narrowly escaped the ungovernable rage of the mob. A body of horse and infantry was drawn out. The multitude at night dispersed of itself. Next day addresses to the Lord-lieutenant were agreed to by both houses, and a committee of enquiry appointed, that the ringleaders of the tumult might be discovered and brought to condign punishment. Some members of the house of commons attempted to throw these outrages, like all other national evils, upon the catholics*.

* The Duke of Bedford made the most honourable amends to the catholics he could on the occasion, by directing Mr. John

The grand embarkation designed for Ireland was to have been from Vannes in Lower Brittany. To cover it, a fleet was fitted out at Brest, commanded by M. de Conflans. The execution of this scheme was delayed by Sir Edward Hawke, who had blocked up that harbour with twenty-three ships of the line for several months. The British fleet having been blown off its station in November, Conflans embraced the opportunity, and sailed with twenty-one large ships and four frigates. Hawke pursued and came up with the French fleet, which he completely defeated in Quiberon bay, in the midst of a storm, in the darkness of the night, and on a rocky shore.

1759.

Threatened
Invasion of
Conflans
defeated by
Hawke.

In the autumn of this year, a marauding squadron by way of causing a diversion, sailed under the command of an enterprising officer, Thurot, from Dunkirk, for the North of Ireland. It consisted originally of five ships, carrying about twelve hundred land forces. The reputation acquired by M. Thurot, as captain of a privateer, raised him to the command of this expedition. Adverse winds drove the squadron to Gottenburgh. Two of the ships were separated from the rest by the violence of the storm, and returned to France. The remaining three arrived off Carrickfergus in February, 1760, and there landed their forces

Thurot's ex-
pedition
against Ire-
land.

Ponsonby, the speaker, to read from the chair his answer to their address; which was an approbation of their past conduct, and an assurance of his future favour and protection as long as they continued in it. It is remarkable, that no trace of this whole transaction is to be found in the journals of the commons.

1759.

reduced to six hundred men. That town, not having any regular force to defend it, was obliged to capitulate. The country rallied with great loyalty and zeal, and were advancing in a body of about 3000 men, when on the 5th day after their landing, the French re-embarked. The winds not permitting them to return by the North of Ireland, they attempted a passage through the channel. Captain Elliot with an equal force came up with them near the Isle of Mann. Having engaged with them about an hour and a half, they struck, being much injured in their masts and rigging; three hundred of their men were killed, and Thurot lost his life in the action*.

Death and
Character of
George II.

On the 25th of October, 1760, George II. died at Kensington, at the advanced age of 77 years. None of his predecessors on the throne lived to so great an age; none enjoyed a more happy or glorious reign. He was a prince of personal intrepidity. The characters of George II. and of his reign are very differently represented by the several masters, who have drawn them from the life. Parties ran high, particularly towards the close of his reign, which was the triumphant era of Whiggism. An irrefragable argument in favour of Whig administrations in general; which differ from others, by their being conducted upon avowed national principles, even, when the public safety

* As this descent of Thurot was the only attempt to land in Ireland for upwards of two centuries, every particular concerning it may be interesting to the Irish reader. An ample detail of all the circumstances attending it is given in my *Historical Review*, p. 330, &c.

requires it, to the thwarting of the personal feelings of the monarch. The glory of his reign arose out of the measures of his ministers, and more particularly of those, who least indulged his predilection for his German dominions. To their stern adherence to public principle was it owing, that the monarch's private affections never did, or to their prudence, that they were never known to the nation to interfere with the public business, influence, or course of justice. The personal talents and endowments of the monarch were avowedly not of a cast either to render himself beloved at home or respected abroad. When he was called to the British throne, his habits and character had assumed a settled form, not very congenial with the freedom and candour of an Englishman. He was proud, diffident, and reserved. His frugality bordered upon avarice. Possessing himself no learning, he despised it in others; he gave no encouragement to talent or literature of any sort. His encomiasts have selected no one great virtue to panegyryze: and though charged with having habitually given into several of the meaner vices, the ungracious function of retailing them may be avoided.

1759.

* "In times full of doubt and danger to his person and family, George the Second maintained the dignity of his crown connected with the liberty of his people,

Mr. Burke's
portrait of
George II.

* Mr. Burke, in the soundest and most admirable of his political works written in the meridian glow of his powers, has left a portrait of this monarch more highly coloured than historical justice warrants. (*Thoughts on the present Discontents*, 430).

1760.

not only unimpaired, but improved for the space of 33 years. He overcame a dangerous rebellion, abetted by foreign force, and raging in the heart of his kingdom; and thereby destroyed the seeds of all future rebellion, that could arise upon the same principle. He carried the glory, the power, the commerce of England, to an height unknown even to this renowned nation in the times of its greatest prosperity; and he left his succession resting on the true and only true foundation of all national and all regal greatness; affection at home, reputation abroad, trust in allies, terror in rival nations. The most ardent lover of his country cannot wish for Great Britain a happier fate, than to continue as she was then left."

CHAPTER V.

The Reign of George III.

FROM HIS ACCESSION TO THE THRONE TO THE
DECLARATION OF IRISH INDEPENDENCE, IN
1782.

No prince ever ascended the throne more to the joy and satisfaction of his people, than our gracious sovereign. He is the grandson of George II. He was the first monarch of the house of Brunswick who was a native of England. In his first speech to the British parliament, he said, “born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of Briton: and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people, whose loyalty and warm affection to me I consider as the greatest and most permanent security of my throne: and I doubt not but their steadiness in those principles will equal the firmness of my invariable resolution to adhere to and strengthen this excellent constitution in church and state; and to maintain the toleration inviolable. The civil and religious rights of my loving subjects are equally dear to me, with the most valuable prerogatives of the crown: and as the surest foundation of the whole, and the best means to draw down the divine favour on my reign,

1760.

Accession
of George
III. and his
speech to
the parlia-
ment.

1760.

it is my fixed purpose, to countenance and encourage the practice of true religion and virtue." In these flattering assurances of the young monarch to the people of Great Britain, Lord Halifax, then lord-lieutenant of Ireland, had it in command to declare to the sister kingdom, that his subjects of Ireland were fully, and in every respect, comprehended*. Congratulatory addresses to the throne flowed in from all descriptions of persons: amongst which, none were more remarkable for their good sense and loyalty, than the addresses from the Quakers and the Roman Catholics.

Origin of
White Boys.

The internal state of Ireland was at this period gloomy from two principal causes: the decline of public credit and the extreme wretchedness of the distressed peasantry. In the general rejoicing at the descent of the crown upon a native monarch victorious in the war, in which he found his people engaged, Ireland alone was doomed to weep. In the southern province of that kingdom great misery produced disturbances in the lowest class of the wretched peasantry. They were generally catholics; and religion was stupidly or maliciously saddled with the cause of these riots. The insurgents at first committed their outrages at night; and appearing generally in frocks or shirts, were denominated *White-Boys*: they seized arms and horses, houghed the cattle, levelled the enclosures of commons, turned up new-made roads, and perpetrated various other acts of outrage and violence. These un-

fortunate wretches, as is the case in all insurgencies, raised a popular cry against the rapacity and tyranny of their landlords, the cruel exactions of tithe-mon-
gers, and the illegal enclosures of commons. 1761.

Various causes concurred in reducing the peasantry to this abject wretchedness. An epidemic disorder of the horned cattle had spread from Holstein through Holland into England, where it raged for some years, and consequently raised the prices of beef, cheese, and butter to exorbitancy; hence pasturage became more profitable than tillage; and the whole agriculture of the south of Ireland, which had for some time past flourished under a milder administration of the popery laws, instantly ceased; the numerous families, which were fed by the labour of agriculture, were turned adrift without means of subsistence. Cottiers being tenants at will were every-where dispossessed of their scanty holdings, and large tracts of grazing land were set to wealthy monopolizers*, who by feeding cattle required few hands, and paid higher rents. Pressed by need, most of these unfortunate peasants sought shelter in the neighbouring towns, for the sake of begging that bread, which they could no longer earn: and the only piteous resource of the affluent was to ship off as many, as would emigrate to seek maintenance or death in foreign climes. The price then paid for the little labour that was done, kept not pace with the rise of necessaries: it exceeded not the wages given in the days of Elizabeth. The landlords de-

Causes of
the riots of
the White
Boys.

* In the cant of these wretched rioters they were called *land-pirates*.

1762.

manded extravagant rents from their cottiers, and to reconcile them to their lettings, they allowed them generally a right of common, of which they soon again deprived them by enclosures. The absolute inability of these oppressed tenants to pay their tithes beside their landlord's rent, made them feel the exaction and levying of them by the proctors, as a grievance insupportable*.

Commission
to enquire
into the
riots.

These insurrections became daily more alarming to government: they instituted a commission of some gentlemen of distinguished loyalty and eminence in the law, to enquire upon the spot into the real causes and circumstances of these riots, who reported, "that the authors of those riots consisted indiscriminately of persons of different persuasions, and that no marks of disaffection to his Majesty's person or government appeared in any of these people†:" which report was confirmed by the judges of the Munster circuit, and by the dying protestations of the first five of the unhappy men, who were executed at Waterford, in 1762, for having been present at the burning of a cabin, upon

* "Consequences have flowed (says Mr. Young) from these oppressions, which ought long ago to have put a stop to them. In England we have heard much of *White Boys*, *Steel Boys*, *Oak Boys*, *Peep-of-day Boys*, &c. But these various insurgents are not to be confounded, for they are very different. The proper distinction in the discontents of this people is into protestant and catholic. All but the White Boys were among the manufacturing protestants of the North. The White Boys, catholic labourers in the South."

† Vide Dublin Gazette, and also *The Enquiry into the Causes of the Outrages committed by the Levellers per totum*.

1762.



the information of an approver, who was the very person, that had set fire to it with his own hand. Fortunately for the country, Sir Richard Aston*, lord-chief-justice of the Common Pleas, was sent down upon a special commission to try great numbers of these rioters; and so well satisfied with the impartiality of his conduct were the inhabitants of those parts, that upon his return from Clonmell, where they had been tried, he had the satisfaction of seeing the road lined on both sides with men, women, and children, thanking him for the unbiassed discharge of his duty, and supplicating Heaven to bless him as their protector, guardian, and deliverer.

The execution of scores of these unfortunate objects of misery and desperation would not answer the views of those, (and too many there shamefully were) who from their own private ends connived at and fomented these tumults. They sought a victim of more renown; and selected Nicholas Sheehy, the parish priest of Clogheen, in the county of Tipperary, a district then particularly infested by the White Boys, as a fit object for their wicked purpose. They proclaimed a reward of 300*l.* upon his head. He, conscious of his

* A more uncorrupt, firm, and humane judge never graced the bench. The extraordinary exultation of the Irish on this occasion, is a strong though melancholy proof, that the chaste impartiality and independence, from which that learned and revered judge never departed, had hitherto been a novelty to the Irish people. He has received the most honourable test of his uprightness in the blame cast at him by the author of *The Memoirs of the different Rebellions in Ireland*, p. 34.

1762.

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innocence, requested to take his trial out of hand at Dublin, where, after a severe scrutiny of fourteen hours, he was honourably acquitted; no evidence having appeared against him but a blackguard boy, a common prostitute, and an impeached thief, all brought out of Clonmell jail, and bribed for the purpose of witnessing against him. His enemies, who had failed in their first attempt, were determined upon his destruction. One Bridge, an informer against some of those, who had been executed for these riots, was said to have been murdered by their associates, in revenge, although his body could never be found*. Sheehy, immediately after his acquittal in Dublin for rebellion, was indicted by his pursuers for this murder; he was transmitted to Clonmell, to be tried there for this new crime, and upon the sole evidence of the same infamous witness, whose testimony had been so justly reprobated in Dublin, he was there found guilty, and hanged for that supposed murder.

The White
Boys com-
plain of
tithes.

The Castle-party studied to fix the catholics with all the disloyalty attending these insurrections. The truth is, that the oppressed peasants being too ignorant to know the law, and too poor to bear it's expenses, betook themselves to violence for redress. Mobs seldom rise, till they have suffered grievance; and

* It was positively sworn, by two unexceptionable witnesses, that he privately left the kingdom some short time before he was said to have been murdered. See notes of the trial taken by one of the jury, in *Exshaw's Magazine* for June, 1766. The iniquitous execution of Mr. Sheehy is more fully detailed in my *Historical Review*, p. 340, &c.

seldomer disperse till they have occasioned mischief. The loudest complaint of these *White Boys* was against the extortions of the tithe proctors. The landlords and graziers, in order to divert the irritation of this wretched peasantry from themselves, cherished or connived at their resistance to the ever unpopular demands of the clergy. This suffering and misguided people bound themselves to each other by oath*. Many undue means were used to exaggerate the evil, and convert it into a popish plot to overturn the government, to massacre the protestants, and to favour the invasion of the enemy. As the lower order of the people in Munster principally consisted of catholics, the insurgency was in the old style of malignancy laid to the account of religion. The house of commons appointed a committee "to enquire into the causes and progress of (what was termed) the popish insurrection in the province of Munster."

1762.

† On the 23d of January, 1762, Mr. Hamilton, secretary to Lord Halifax, communicated to the commons the rupture with the court of Spain: in consequence of which his majesty had directed an immediate augmentation of five battalions to the establishment, and a vote of credit passed for the raising of 500,000*l*. The house of commons also resolved

Encrease of establishment and of lord-lieutenant's allowance.

* The form of the oath is given in my Historical Review, vol. I. 341. But the most prurient malice cannot distort one word of it into an engagement to the Pope, French, or Pretender, as it was currently represented.

† 8 Journ. Com. p. 136.

1762.



upon an address to the lord-lieutenant, requesting that he would represent to his majesty the sense of that house, that his majesty would be pleased to augment his excellency's allowances to the annual sum of 16,000*l*.

Other ris-
ings suc-
ceed that of
the White
Boys.

At the close of the session of 1762, Lord Halifax, congratulated parliament upon the insurrections of the *White Boys** being suppressed. Yet the spirit of insurrection was not eradicated: the roots of the evil had spread wider than the province of Munster; for elsewhere also the lower orders were *wretched, oppressed, and impoverished*. New risings took place on different principles, *Oak Boys* and *Hearts-of-Steel Boys* made their appearance successively in the northern counties.

Oak Boys.

The highways in Ireland were formerly made and repaired by the labour of housekeepers. He who had a horse, was obliged to work six days in the year; himself and horse: he who had none, was to give six day's labour. It had been long complained of, that the poor alone were compelled to work; that the rich were exempt; that instead of mending the public roads, the sweat of their brows was wasted on private *job-roads*. Parishes rose to a man, and from the oaken branches, which they wore in their hats, the insurgents were denominated *Oak Boys*. From parishes the contagion flew to baronies, from baronies to counties; till at length the greater part of Ulster was engaged. Besides the overseers of roads,

* 7 Comm. Journ. p. 173.

1762.

they attacked the clergy, whom they resolved to curtail of their tithes, and their landlords, the price of whose lands (particularly the *turf-logs*) they set about regulating. The army was collected from the other provinces; for till then the province of Ulster was deemed so peaceful, that scarcely any troops were quartered in it. With the loss of some lives, the tumult was soon quelled; and by some legislative regulations for the future repairs of the roads, quiet was restored.

The rising of the *Steel Boys* was not so general, but more violent. An absentee nobleman, possessed of one of the largest estates in the kingdom, instead of letting his land when out of lease, for the highest rent, adopted a novel mode, of taking large fines and small rents. The occupier of the ground, though willing to give the highest rent, was unable to pay the fines. He was bought out by the wealthy undertaker, who not contented with a moderate interest for his money, racked the rents to a pitch above the reach of the old tenant. The ousted tenants caused risings against the forestallers, destroying their houses, and maiming their cattle. They too became like the *Oak Boys* general reformers. The army soon subdued them; some prisoners suffered by the hands of the executioner, and the country was restored to tranquillity.

Lord Bute's administration gave the first check to the Whig interest since the accession of the house of Brunswick. He carried the Tory principles (with exception to Jacobitism) to the highest sublimation. Upon the resignation of Mr. Pitt*, the mer-

Address to
Mr. Pitt, on
his resignation.

* Mr. Pitt, whose vigorous and successful administration had

1763.

chants and traders of Dublin in a body, not indeed legally representing, but well known to speak the sentiments of the great majority of the people of Ireland, presented an address to Mr. Pitt, expressive of their admiration of his principles and conduct, and their sincere condolence, that his country was deprived of his services *. The merchants, traders, and citizens of Dublin at this time being the most opulent and considerable body of men in the kingdom, took the lead in watching and forwarding the civil interests of the nation. They were encouraged and directed by Dr. Lucas, who (after having triumphed over all his enemies and persecutors) now represented them in parliament.

Failure of
patriotic
bills in the
commons.

Doctor Lucas had been prominently forward in procuring a resolution of the commons to bring in heads of a bill to limit the duration of parliaments, in imitation of the English septennial bill; which was negatived by a majority of 65. The loss of a question

much endeared him to the people, having proposed in the cabinet an immediate declaration against Spain, and being only supported by his brother-in-law, Earl Temple, he immediately resigned, in order *not to remain responsible for measures, which he was no longer allowed to guide*. A principle more admired than imitated.

* It has often been said, that the late Earl of Chatham was a Tory at heart, notwithstanding his boasted avowals of Whiggism. That in his youth he was a Tory appears more than probable: but it would be too harsh a censure on so great a statesman, to conclude, that his conversion to Whiggism was the effect of interest, and not of conviction. The address may be seen in the App. to my Hist. Review, No. LXIX.


1763.

so reasonable, and constitutional, marks the rapid decline of the patriotic interest in Ireland after the late changes. This ministerial triumph was followed by no popular disturbance, but great dissatisfaction. The merchants, traders, and citizens of Dublin, came to strong resolutions, expressive of the general discontent at the loss of the Septennial Bill, which raised an awful alarm in government. That failure however did not discourage the patriotic Lucas. He presented heads of bills for securing the freedom of parliament, by ascertaining the qualifications for knights, citizens, and burgesses, and by vacating the seats of members, who should accept any lucrative office or employment from the Crown, and of persons upon the establishment of Great Britain or Ireland. Each failed from the superior numbers of the court party.

After the Earl of Halifax had been recalled to England to succeed Mr. G. Grenville as secretary of state*, the Earl of Northumberland came over as lord-lieutenant to meet the parliament, in October, 1763. His speech to them on this occasion, was expressive of his majesty's just and gracious regard for a dutiful and loyal people : he congratulated them on the happy effects of the peace, and the birth of the Prince of Wales. The remainder of his speech referred to the late disturbances in Ulster. A motion

The Earl of
Halifax
succeeded
by the Earl
of North-
umberland.

† This change in the English Ministry happened on the 14th of October, 1762. Mr. G. Grenville held this situation till July 12, 1765, when he was succeeded by the Duke of Grafton.

1763.  for the committee to enquire into the causes of the tumultuous risings in Ulster, and the means to suppress them, and the causes of insurrection in the south, and to report the whole matter, specially, was negatived by putting the previous question on a division of eighty against twenty-six. Thus was the door shut against enquiry, too probably from apprehension, that the truth would be recorded, and an effectual stop put to the system of converting popular discontents into the engines of state intrigue. To know the source of a disorder, is the first step to it's cure. In order however to delude the people, * the house received from it's committee several general resolutions, which were mere truisms, and gave no information, furnished no redress, supplied no means, afforded no security, effected no remedy.

Further efforts of the patriots to regulate the pension list.

Notwithstanding the patriots had often failed in their parliamentary efforts to bring the system of government into some constitutional consistency, they still persevered, particularly in their attempt to reduce and regulate the pension list. The commons resolved themselves into a committee of the whole house to take into consideration the state of the pensions upon the civil establishment of the kingdom, and how the encrease of them might be prevented : but the motion for addressing his majesty on the subject was negatived on a division of 112 against 73. The pensions then charged upon the civil establishment amounted to 72,000*l.* per ann. The private revenue of the crown,

* Journ. Com. vol. VII. p. 293.

which the law left at it's discretionary disposal, did not at the same time exceed 7000*l.* per ann., so that the pensions exceeded the fund, which could alone be charged with them by 65,000*l.* per ann. *

1763.

There then was in Ireland a certain description of persons, who professed themselves at all times enemies by principle, and persecutors by disposition of their catholic countrymen. They were ready instruments in the hands of the ambitious prelate, to whose intrigues were attributed by Lord Clare (in his speech on the Union) all the party heats and animosities, that so long disturbed and degraded the parliamentary proceedings. As long as Primate Stone lived †, he pursued the Machiavelian policy of keeping the Irish a divided people, and to him is to be attributed the failure of the first effort in favor of the catholics, during the present reign. On the 25th of November, 1763, Mr. Mason proposed fresh heads of a bill which he reminded the house, had in the last session ‡,

First effort
in favor of
catholics
fails
through
Primate
Stone.

* The various motions and debates upon the pension list are given at large in my Historical Review, vol. I. 358 to 366. The pension list was warmly debated during this administration. The Earl of Northumberland accepted of his appointment, on a stipulation with the King, that no pension should be granted for life during his lieutenancy. This was religiously observed, except in the case of a pension of 5000*l.* to Trustees for the Princess Augusta, to her separate use during life, which had been previously agreed upon. The Duke of York's pension of 8000*l.* was granted during pleasure.

† He died on the 10th of December, 1764.

‡ It cannot have been the effect of oblivion that the journals of parliament have taken no notice of the proceedings on that bill in the last session.

1763. passed without a division for empowering papists to lend money on mortgage of real estates: they had been lost in England: for what reason he knew not, as he thought the passing of such a bill would have been of great advantage. Mr. Le Hunte opposed the bill, which might eventually make papists proprietors of great part of the landed interest of the kingdom; and that would be dangerous. He observed, that the heads of the bill passed in the last session, had not passed without a division, there having been a majority of no more than twelve in their favor: he said they would not have passed at all, had they not been artfully brought in the very last day of the session, when no more than sixty-two members were present. When a motion was afterwards made, and the question put, that the heads of the bill be rejected, the house divided 138 for the rejection, and 53 against it.

Deaths of
Primate
Stone and
Lord Shan-
non.

Keen, though silent were the grief and disappointment of the catholics at the failure of this application to the favor of the legislature, not in fact for any new indulgence, but for assuring the continuance of the capacity to take real security for money, the legality of which the astuteness of their enemies had lately only questioned. Their despondency was not of long duration. Their oppression formed the base of the then Anglo-Hybernian system of government. The deaths of Primate Stone and the Earl of Shannon, in December, 1764, put an end to that system. Thence a new scene opens to the view. To this moment of Irish history Lord Clare alluded, when he said, *the government of England at length opened their eyes to the*

defects and dangers of it: they shook the power of the Aristocracy, but were unable to break it down. 1765.

Upon the deaths of two of the lords-justices, Lord-chancellor Bowes, and Mr. Ponsonby the speaker of the house of commons were appointed, to whom afterwards the Earl of Drogheda was joined; and from the change of system they were the last. Lord Viscount Weymouth though appointed never went over, and the Earl of Hertford succeeded as lord-lieutenant*.

The last lords-justices in Ireland.

By the management of the castle, the patriots were greatly reduced; but their spirit was not subdued. They returned to the charge of the pensions.† A motion for an address on the subject to his majesty in the Commons was negatived by a majority of 119 against 41. Another motion for an address for redress of grievances and correction of abuses, in the appointment of magistrates and administration of justice was negatived by 71 voices against 35. This decrease of the minority stimulated those, who had not yet been bought off, to bring forward some motion, which should fully disclose to the nation the corrupt means,

The patriots renew their efforts.

* In December, 1765, died at Rome the Chevalier de St. George, only son of James II. He was the subject of the political fable of the Warming Pan. He supported a long life of misfortunes, sufferings, and retirement with christian fortitude. His attempt to recover the British throne, in 1715, and his son's in 1745, made no sensation in Ireland. His death was scarcely known or spoken of in that country.

† 8 Journ. Com. p. 64.

1767.

by which their rights were sold to an English interest. On the very next day* a motion was made for an address to the lord lieutenant, the Earl of Hertford, requesting his excellency to lay before that house all the proceedings of the privy council in March last, relative to the suppression of heads of a bill, for *securing the freedom of parliament*; and all the patents granted in reversion or in possession during that administration; and that his excellency would use his influence, that no more reversionary grants should be disposed of in that kingdom, as they debilitated the crown, and entailed burdens upon the people. The court-party defeated the patriots by a contrary motion, that in lieu of the words in the address, *the sense of their miserable condition*, they should insert the words, *their happy condition under his majesty's auspicious government*. In septennial parliaments the people foresaw a sure check against the systematical venality of parliament. Resolutions and addresses in favour of that measure were poured in from Dublin and every part of the kingdom. Still were the efforts of the patriots in parliament, and of the people without ineffectual. The heads of the bill were introduced, agreed to, and transmitted, but arrested in their progress by the English privy council. The lord-lieutenant affected to persuade the commons†, that he had made the strongest representations in favour of such a law. The

* 24 May, 1767. 3 Journ. Com. p. 143.

† 8 Journ. Com. p. 132.

patriots thereupon moved a very strong address to be presented to his majesty, which spoke a language of too much firmness for the taste of the court party. It was negatived upon a division of 117 against 29*. A more moderate address was however moved by the patriots on the next day, which they carried by a majority of two voices : there being 90 for and 88 against it.

1767.

The answer to the address did not appear gracious to the addressers. His majesty was aware of the wishes of the commons for limiting the duration of parliaments, by their having passed the heads of a bill. But no consideration could prevail with his majesty to swerve from the indispensable duty of concurring in such provisions only, as on mature deliberation and advice of his council appeared to him at the time calculated to promote the true interest and happiness of his people. From this answer, and the conduct of the British cabinet upon it, it appears, as if they had selected this particular juncture for a trial of strength between the *English* and the *Irish* interest. A bill for the better securing the liberties of the subject passed in the commons, was transmitted, but never returned. Another popular bill, to prevent the buying and selling of offices, which concern the administration of justice, or the collection of his majesty's revenue, was transmitted, but miscarried in the commons. Thus failed every effort of the patriots to remedy the system of venality, and to bring back the constitution to its purity.

Ungracious
answer to
the address.

1767.

Patriotism
of Dr.
Lucas.

The most active of the patriots at that time was Dr. Lucas. He was of course obnoxious to government. It was the policy of the castle, to throw all possible disrepute upon the few, who still earnestly espoused the patriotic cause, as Lucas did to the last hour of his life. Yet notwithstanding this official opposition, Dr. Lucas's personal virtue and talent commanded the esteem and respect both of his sovereign and his vicegerents. The Earl of Hertford had particularly noticed him when he was in England, and was personally esteemed by him in return: he had also to boast of kind treatment from the Lords Chesterfield and Harrington, Halifax and Northumberland. He bore affection, as well as loyalty to his majesty. The unremitted and faithful attention to his parliamentary duties, with the discouraging prospect of failing in every exertion, forced from him a confession, that he was weary of his task, because he laboured incessantly in vain.

Ld. Towns-
hend suc-
ceeds Lord
Hertford.

Lord Hertford not having lent himself as pliantly, as was expected to the work of the British cabinet, which it must be therefore presumed he disapproved of, was recalled. The old lords-justices filled their stations for the last time until the appointment of Lord Townshend to be lord-lieutenant on the 14th of October, 1767.

The ancient
system of
governing
Ireland.

Under this administration was introduced a new system of governing Ireland. The choice of this nobleman for the purpose was in many points judicious. In order to attempt the arduous task of supplanting the deep-rooted influence of the Irish oligarchy, it was requisite, that the lord-lieutenant, to whom

1767.

that power was to be transferred, should be endowed with the qualities most likely to ingratiate him with the Irish nation; convivial ease, humour, liberality, and valour. The majority in the commons grew daily less tractable by those, who had the management of the English interest, than it formerly had been. Three or four grandees had such an influence in the commons, that their coalition commanded a majority on any question*. Formerly the principals used to stipulate with each new lord-lieutenant, whose office was biennial, and residence but for six months, upon what terms, they would carry the king's business through the house: so that they might not improperly be called *undertakers*. They provided, that the disposal of all court favors, whether places, pensions, or preferments, should pass through their hands, in order to keep their suite in an absolute state of dependance and vassalage. All applications were made by the leader, who claimed as a right the privilege of gratifying his friends in proportion to their numbers. Whenever such demands were not complied with, then were the measures of government sure to be crossed and obstructed: and the session of parliament became a constant struggle for power between the heads of parties. This evil had been seen and lamented by Lord Chesterfield. His resolution and preparatory steps for undermining it probably contributed to his recal on the cessation of danger,

* Dr. Camb. Phil. Surv. p. 57.

1767.

Particular
views of
Lord
Town-
shend's ad-
ministra-
tion.

which his wisdom alone was thought competent to avert.

The primary object of Lord Townshend's administration was to break up the monopolizing system of the oligarchy. He in part succeeded, but by means ruinous to the country. The subalterns were not to be detached from their chiefs, but by similar, though more powerful means, than those, by which they had been enlisted under their banners. The streams of favor became not only multiplied, but enlarged; consequently the source of remuneration was the sooner exhausted. Every individual looked up directly to the fountain head. The innovation provoked the deserted few to resentment: but they were bereft of their consequence, when left to their individual exertions*. They took refuge under the shelter of patriotism, and inveighed against the venality of the system, because it had taken a new direction. The bulk of the nation, and some, though very few of their representatives in parliament, were earnest, firm, and implacable against it.

Lord
Town-
shend's ad-
dress in
managing
the system.

The arduous task, which Lord Townshend had assumed was not to be effected by a coup de main:

* Under various pretences these gentlemen endeavoured to spirit up the people to adopt their resentments, and affected to take refuge in the arms of patriotism. The contest produced a series of political letters, replete with wit and humour, inferior perhaps to nothing of the kind, except the letters of Junius. They have been collected and published in an octavo volume, under the title of *Baratariana*.

1767.



forces so engaged, marshalled, and commanded, were not to be dislodged by a sudden charge: regular and cautious approaches were to be made: it was requisite, that the chief governor should be first popular, then powerful, before he could be successful. His lordship to those convivial fascinations, to which the Irish are eminently sensible, superadded as many personal favors, as his fiscal resources admitted*. He judiciously countenanced the cry for septennial parliaments; in which the patriots anticipated the cure of gross venality by the return of their power and controul over their representatives. Government indeed felt, that they could not decently withhold from Ireland what England had so long enjoyed †.

Dr. Lucas had several times failed in his endeavours to procure a bill for limiting the duration of parliament. Now however a septennial bill was transmitted, and returned altered into an octennial one. There appears to have been some unfair manœuvring

An octennial bill obtained.

* To break up the mischievous system of the Irish Oligarchy, Lord Townshend not only employed the means furnished by government, but had the singular merit of having sacrificed his own patrimony, to the service of the state. The allowance of 16000*l.* per ann., sufficed not to maintain that Establishment, which his zeal, for the public service, and the liberality of his own disposition pointed out as necessary. This nobleman during his vice-royalty, contracted a heavy debt; which his son the present marquis is now selling a part of the family estate to discharge.

† The British parliaments have continuance for seven years, unless sooner dissolved by the King, by 1 Geo. I. c. 38.

1767.

in the British cabinet, in order by a side wind to deprive the Irish of that, which they durst not openly refuse them. At the same time a transmiss was made of another popular bill for the independance of the judges, in which the English cabinet had also inserted some alteration. It was expected, that the pertinacity of the Irish commons for their privilege would have induced them to reject any bill, into which an alteration had been introduced. The English cabinet was deceived: the Irish commons waved the objection as to the limitation bill, in order to make sure at last of what they had so long tried in vain to procure: they considered, that by objecting on this very account to the judges' bill, they kept up the claim to their privilege: for although this latter bill had been particularly recommended in the speech of the lord-lieutenant, it was on account of alterations inserted in it in England, upon the report of the committee appointed to compare the bill with the heads of the bill, unanimously rejected*.

New system of Lord
Townshend.

The return of the octennial bill was followed by a grateful address to the throne: and when the royal assent was given, the people took the horses from the Lord Lieutenant's coach, and drew him to the castle with enthusiastic exultation†. His excel-

* Vid. 8 Journ. Com. p. 270.

† Dr. Campbell, five years from that time observed, (p. 58.)

“ Notwithstanding that deed were so pleasing to the people, yet they then began to think, that that favorite law was of no other

lency's* popularity was not lasting. By dividing the channel of favour into a multitude of streams, the gentlemen of the house of commons were taught to look up to the lord-lieutenant, not only as the source, but as the actual dispenser of every boon. Not even a commission in the revenue of 40*l.* a year, could be disposed of but through him. Thus were the old undertakers given to understand, that there was another way of doing business, than through them. It was not without violence on both sides, that Lord Townshend effected his purpose. The immediate sufferers termed this alteration in the system of governing an innovation, which they artfully taught the people to resent, as a national grievance.

1768.

Early in the first session, the attention of parliament was drawn to the consideration of the army upon the Irish establishment. A message was sent to the commons from his excellency intimating, that his Majesty thought it necessary, that his army upon the Irish establishment should be augmented to 15,235 men. In consequence of this message, a committee was appointed to enquire into the state of the military establishment, and also into the application of the money granted for its support from 25th March, 1751. The result of that enquiry brought to light great misconduct and abuse in the military departments.

Augmentation of the army.

The unusual interval of sixteen months between the use, than to increase the value of boroughs; a single seat in one of which then sold for 2000*l.* at least."

Ld. Townshend's management of the new system.

* Ibid.

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dissolution of the old and the meeting of the new parliament was sedulously employed by the lord-lieutenant in forming the particular arrangements with the new members for carrying on the work of government, upon the new system of the immediate influence of the chief governor: and considering the length of possession, the nature of the power, the struggle of the former holders to retain it, and their personal weight and influence upon their dependents, his efforts were upon the whole successful for a first essay. On the 17th of October, 1769, the lord-lieutenant met the new parliament. Mr. John Ponsonby was unanimously elected speaker. Lord Townshend, whose special mission was to create a new junto in support of the English interest, independent of their former leaders, had not so matured his plan, as to have ensured the whole game. He had not altered the nature, but only raised the price of accommodation. As in the old, so in the new system some cases appear to have been reserved out of the general bargain. Such formerly had been the reservation of a right to vote for limited parliaments. Such now was the right to resist the claim of the English council to originate money bills in the British cabinet, in lieu of the Irish house of commons. The matter was brought fairly to issue between them; the commons refused to pass the money bill, and came to an unanimous resolution, that the said bill was rejected because it did not take its rise in that house. The lord-lieutenant protested against this right of the commons, and

endeavoured, but in vain, to enter his protest upon their Journals*. The house would not submit to this encroachment upon their privileges. The lords were less inflexible, and after much opposition and debate, his excellency's protest was solemnly recorded on the Journals of the house of peers†. Only two bills passed in this singular and short session of parliament. The commons were dissatisfied with the papers ordered by the lord-lieutenant to be submitted to them: and a motion was made by way of amendment to the address, with a view to procure them‡. Upon which a division took place of forty-seven for, and sixty-five against the motion. This was the first trial of the strength of the lord-lieutenant's newly marshalled phalanx. It was not upon any of the expected questions; and he was far from being satisfied with his victory. He deferred further experiment, till he had more fully secured his men.

1769.

§ Once more was the money bill rejected by ninety-four against seventy-one: and it was resolved, *that the said bill was rejected because it did not take its rise in that house.* The lord lieutenant took this defeat so much to heart, that he resolved to bring on

Opposition of the commons encreases.

* This matter is more fully handled in my Historical Review, vol. I. p. 369, &c.

† In the Appendix, No. LX. to my Historical Review, may be seen the protest of the five dissentient lords, and also the protest of the lord-lieutenant, and the whole proceeding thereupon from the Lords' Journals.

‡ 8 Journ. Com. p. 295.

§ Journ. Com. vol. VIII. p. 323.

1769.

no more government questions during that session: or until he could, according to the castle phrase, make more sure of the King's business. The representations of this transaction in England were grossly insulting to Ireland. Mr. Woodfall's Public Advertiser contained several offensive paragraphs*, which, having been read, it was resolved, were a false and infamous libel upon the proceedings of that house, a daring invasion of the parliament, and calculated to create groundless jealousies between his Majesty's faithful subjects of Great Britain and Ireland: it was therefore ordered, that the said paper should be, and it was accordingly burnt by the hands

* Journ. Com. vol. VIII. p. 344. "Hibernian patriotism is a transcript of that filthy idol worshipped at the London Tavern; insolence, assumed from an opinion of impunity, usurps the place, which boldness against real injuries ought to hold. The refusal of the late bill, because it was not brought in contrary to the practice of ages, in violation of the constitution, and to the certain ruin of the dependance of Ireland upon Great Britain, is a behaviour more suiting an army of White-Boys, than the grave representatives of a nation. This is the most daring insult, that has been offered to government. It must be counteracted with firmness, or else the state is ruined. Let the refractory house be dissolved; should the next copy their example, let it also be dissolved; and if the same spirit of seditious obstinacy should continue, I know no remedy but one, and it is extremely obvious. The parliament of Great Britain is supreme over its conquests, as well as colonies, and the service of the nation must not be left undone, on account of the factious obstinacy of a provincial assembly. Let our legislature, for they have an undoubted right, vote the Irish supplies; and so save a nation, that their own obstinate representatives endeavour to ruin."

of the common hangman, on the 20th of December, in the presence of the sheriffs and an immense crowd. 1769.

* On the same day, Sir Charles Bingham brought up the report from the committee, to which it had been referred, to enquire into the state of the pensions. The ministerial party, apprised of his excellency's intention to prorogue the parliament within the week, and sensible, that the subject of pensions was too green a wound to be probed in that temper of the house, moved to adjourn the further consideration of the report till after the holidays. On this tender subject many of the ministerialists, who had quitted their ranks on the former questions, fell back according to their engagements, and outvoted the patriots by a majority of nine. The patriots resolved to address his excellency to inform them, whether it were his intention to prorogue the parliament sooner than usual. The lord-lieutenant once more failed in doing the King's business. Upon a division on the main question the minister was opposed by 106, and supported only by 73†.

More alarming opposition of the commons.

On the very next day, Sir George Macartney, the secretary, reported to the house his excellency's answer, which was neither ambiguous nor gracious. On the 26th of December his excellency put an end to the session, on which occasion the speaker, Mr. John Ponsonby, at the bar of the house of peers, made

Lord-lieutenant's ungracious answer, and parliament prorogued.

* Journ. Comm. vol. VIII. p. 353.

† Ib. p. 353.

1771.

a very spirited speech*. His excellency made a very pointed speech to the commons, setting forth his reasons for protesting against their conduct, which they gave orders to their clerk not to enter on their Journals. The parliament was prorogued to the 20th of March, 1770, and by five successive proclamations it was prorogued ultimately to the 26th of February, 1771, for the dispatch of business.

Effects of
these un-
usual proro-
gations.

This measure of depriving the nation of the benefit of their representatives, because a majority of them had stood up firmly for their privileges, coupled with the effect produced by some angry expressions of the secretary in debate, threw the public mind into an irritation, which was not confined to Ireland. A motion was made in the British house of commons, by the Hon. Boyle Walsingham†, on the late extraordinary prorogation of the Irish parliament, for an address to his Majesty, to give directions to lay before that house a copy of all instructions to the lord-lieutenant relating to the late sudden prorogation of the Irish parliament, at a time when affairs of the greatest national import-

* It is remarkable, that the Journals of the lords take no notice of the speaker's speech to the lord-liuetenant; that appears only in the Journals of the commons (vol. VIII. p. 354.) and the Journals of the commons make no mention of the lord-lieutenant's speech to the commons: that appears in the vol. IV. of the lords' Journals, p. 538, the whole of which, with the proceedings and protest, are to be seen in the Appendix, No. LXI. of my Historical Review.

† Parliam. Deb. vol. V. p. 309.

1771.

ance to that kingdom were depending, together with the papers, on which the instructions were founded, and his answers; and likewise a copy of a message relative to the augmentation of the forces. The motion was seconded by the Right Hon. George Grenville, who maintained, that the late prorogation was most unconstitutional. Lord North justified the prorogation and augmentation, and negatived the question, by a division of 178 against 66.

During this extraordinary cessation of parliament, the lord-lieutenant redoubled his efforts to complete his operose system of ensuring a majority of individuals. He gained several of the opposite party; at the head of whom shone conspicuous, the great *quondam* patriot, Mr. Sexton Pery.

Lord-lieutenant's success in increasing his party during the cessation.

With this accession of force the lord-lieutenant faced the parliament in full confidence. Addresses were voted as usual to his Majesty and the lord-lieutenant. In their address to the King, the commons returned thanks to his Majesty for continuing Lord Townsend in the government. The address was carried by 152 against 107. In consequence thereof the speaker, Mr. John Ponsonby, wrote a spirited letter, which was communicated to the house by the clerk, intimating, that as such thanks seemed to convey a censure of their proceedings, and a relinquishment of the privileges of the commons, his respect to them must prevent his being the instrument of delivering such an address; and he requested them to elect another speaker, who might not think such conduct inconsistent with his honour. The commons thereupon elected Edmond Sexton

Lord Townsend meets the new parliament.

1771. Pery, Esq. speaker. He had a majority of four votes. Mr. J. Ponsonby was as much applauded by the people for his spirit and principle, as Mr. Pery was reviled and execrated.

Lord Townsend secures a sure majority of one-third of the house.

The patriots would submit to nothing without a division, and upon each they gradually decreased; in so much, that the lord-lieutenant might, on every occasion, command a sure majority of one-third of the whole house. The patriots, however, resolved to leave upon their Journals a faithful portrait of their suffering and degraded country; and therefore moved an address to his Majesty, particularly expressive of their sense of the abuse of government authority and influence. They took great offence at the words contained in the address of thanks for his excellency's *just and prudent administration*. In the lords similar objections were taken to their address, which thanked his Majesty for continuing Lord Townsend in the government, whose justice and integrity were particularly commended. The address was opposed by fifteen lords, who, in their protest, handed down to posterity the real grounds of their opposition to Lord Townsend's administration*.

Fiscal resources of Ireland inadequate to Lord Townsend's plan.

The national debt of Ireland was heavily accumulated during the administration of Lord Townsend. Yet, after the experience, which two years and a quarter had given him, of the inadequacy of the fiscal resources of that kingdom to answer his new plan of

* The address of the commons and protest of the lords are interesting, and may be seen in my Historical Review, vol. I. p. 407, 408, 409, 410, and in it's Appendix, No. LXII.

keeping up the *English interest*, he feared to call for any supplies, alleging in his speech to parliament, on the 26th of February, 1771, that with very strict economy, the duties granted last session would be sufficient to answer the expenses of his Majesty's government, without further supply. But when he met the parliament in October, 1771, he told them, that it was with concern, that he must ask a sum of money to discharge the arrears already incurred on his Majesty's establishments*.

1772.

The remainder of Lord Townsend's administration went over without further opposition. His natural humanity and benevolence softened as much as possible the rigour of the popery laws. Having been so successful in proselytizing for the state by pensions, he applied his specific to the evangelizing for the church, by adding 10*l.* to the 30*l.* yearly allowed by the 8th of Ann, to every popish priest, who should become protestant. For, as the act recites, it had been found by experience, that the former provision of 30*l.* per ann. *was in no respect a sufficient encouragement for popish priests to become converts*; therefore 40*l.* per ann. were in future allowed them, to be levied on the

The only two acts affecting the Roman catholics during Lord Townsend's government.

* Strong objections have been made to the unconstitutional system of Lord Townsend's administration, both in and out of parliament. He had so completed his system of managing the house of commons, that he could on all occasions secure a majority of one-third: and by such majority did he carry the question on seventeen different divisions, on the two first days of the session. Many of these questions turned upon mere matters of fact, which the patriots charged him with having designedly misrepresented, in order to deceive the people.

1772. inhabitants of the district, wherein the convert last resided. This act for the encouragement of converts to the protestant religion was counterbalanced by another act made in the same session, supposed to be favourable to the catholics, and which, in times of less liberality, had been repeatedly rejected, as tending to encourage popery. This was *An Act to encourage the reclaiming of unprofitable Bogs**; by which a catholic might be at liberty to take a lease of fifty plantation acres of bog, with one half an acre of arable land adjoining, if the depth of the bog from the surface, when reclaimed, were four feet at least. Every effort to counteract the system so successfully established by this lord-lieutenant became not only negatively fruitless, but positively mischievous, by increasing the evil and extending the infection. As this governor had so completely succeeded in establishing a systematic management of parliament, it was judiciously observed in the year 1775, that his successor, *Lord Harcourt*, then found the parliament of Ireland as obsequious as that of Great Britain.†

Administra-
tion of Lord
Harcourt.

When Lord Harcourt assumed the government in October, 1772, he had little to do, but to continue the system, under which his predecessor had with so much perseverance and charge established the new *English interest*. Lord Clare‡ has observed, that Lord Harcourt was chosen as a man of amiable cha-

* 11 and 12 Geo. III. c. xxi.

† Camb. Phil. Surv. p. 59.

‡ Clare *ubi supra*.

1773.

racter, easy disposition, and of no other ambition, than to move by direction, and thus acquire the approbation of his immediate employers. He had been nearly twelve months in Ireland before he met the parliament, on the 12th of October, 1773. His excellency's speech was a mere pledge faithfully to apply and frugally to administer the supplies. The first stand made by the patriots, was upon an alarm at the intention of government, in laying the accounts before the house, to hold back several of the documents, which would bring to light the means used in the late administration to ensure a majority *to do the King's business*. To * a motion made for their production, an amendment was proposed, by adding the words, *as far as there are materials for that purpose*. The amendment was carried by 88 against 52. Thus was it left in the discretion of the government to bring forward or hold back what materials they chose. The most acceptable act of the present session was the repeal of that unconstitutional one for the trial of offenders out of their own counties, passed in Lord Townsend's administration. The objections taken by the patriots to Lord Townsend's new system of securing a parliamentary majority were confirmed and aggravated by the necessity his successor was under of providing for the discharge of an arrear of 265,000*l.* and imposing an additional burthen of 100,000*l.* a year.

Lord Harcourt's administration at first promised so much intention to promote the real interest of Ireland,

Absentee tax proposed by government and rejected.

* Journ. Com. vol. IX. p. 16.

1774.



that it met with the support of several popular characters, which afterwards opposed it, when they found it conducted upon the principles and plan of Lord Townsend. Lord Harcourt had the exclusive merit of having proposed an absentee tax, to be paid by all persons, who should not actually reside in that kingdom for the space of six months in each year. This measure, though highly desirable, could not so decently be pressed by the representatives of the English government, as left to the freedom of the Irish parliament, whose interest it more immediately concerned. It was not made a government question, and most of the servants of the crown voted against it. Considering the powerful interest made against the tax by the most considerable land-owners on both sides of the water, the small majority, by which it was rejected, is rather to be wondered at: there being 102 for and 122 against the measure*.

Lord Harcourt opens the door to catholic rights.

To the further credit of Lord Harcourt's administration must be laid the merit of having opened the door of civil liberty, through which the great body of the Irish was afterwards admitted to some of the rights of subjects. The British ministry began about this time to be alarmed at the too deeply rooted discontents of the king's American subjects. The constitutional maxim, *no representation, no taxation*,

* The correspondence between Lord North and some of the chief land owners resident in England, who opposed the measure, will fully and fairly display the grounds of its failure. These were the Duke of Devonshire, Lords Besborough, Ossory, Rockingham, and Milton. Vid. my Historical Review, p. 423.

1774.


was carried into action on the other side of the Atlantic,* and the fatal and the ill-advised resistance ended in the avulsion of that bright western gem from the imperial diadem. Lord North clearly saw the inversion of many constitutional maxims, when brought practically to bear upon the bulk of the Irish nation. He instructed the lord-lieutenant to endeavour to engage the affections of the catholics by gradual relaxations of the penal code. * Leave was given to bring in the heads of a bill to secure the repayment of money, lent by papists to protestants on mortgages; and that it might be understood to be a government measure of grace, Mr. Mason, Sir Lucius O'Bryen, and Mr. Langrishe, determined supporters of government, were ordered to bring it in. † On the preceding day leave had been given to bring in heads of a bill to enable papists to take leases for lives of lands. But neither of these bills at that time proceeded. The easy mind of Lord Harcourt was persuaded, that their passing would create disturbances in parliament, and interrupt that quiet majority, which he had it strongly in command to keep up. The British ministry sent positive orders, that some act of the legislature should be passed in that session of a conciliatory tendency to the catholics. Leave was given to bring in a bill to enable his majesty's subjects of whatever persuasion to testify their allegiance upon oath ‡; and as the bill re-

* Comm. Journ. p. 28.

+ 9 Com. Journ. p. 27.

‡ Com. Journ. p. 114. Mr. Robert French, and Sir Lucius O'Bryen, two ministerial members, were ordered to bring it in.

1774.

mitted no part of the then existing code of severity, but purported merely a permission to the catholics of expressing their allegiance to their sovereign, which before they had not, it passed both houses without obstruction or opposition*. It gratified the catholics, inasmuch as it was a formal recognition, that they were subjects; and to this recognition they looked up as to the corner-stone of their future emancipation.

Analogies
of Ireland
to America.

On opening the session in October, 1775, the lord-lieutenant referred to some acts, which the British legislature had passed during the recess of the Irish parliament, for the encouragement of Irish agriculture and commerce. Such were the extension of the advantages of British fisheries to Ireland: the allowing the importation of rape-seed into Great Britain from Ireland, and a bounty granted by Great Britain upon the importation of flax into Ireland. Hence arose several debates in the British house of commons, in one of which a very improvident and unequivocal declaration was made by Mr. Rigby †, that *the parliament of Great Britain had a right to tax Ireland in all cases whatsoever as well as America.*

Effects of
American
rebellion
upon Ire-
land.

The differences between America and her mother country had now broken into open war. Most of the

* 9 Journ. Com. p. 160. 13 and 14 Geo. III. c. xxxv. For the form of this oath or test, vide Appendix, No. LXIII. to my Historical Review.

† He had been Secretary to the Duke of Bedford, and then enjoyed the *sinecure*, as in those days was the office of Master of the Rolls in Ireland.

1775.


leading members of the Whig-party in both countries (which furnished that administration, which put an end to the American war) opposed the war upon principle: they inveighed against the unconstitutional exactions of the ministry, and in their debates fell little short of justifying the American rebellion. The analogy between America and Ireland was too close to pass unnoticed; and the defection of the American colonies produced strong effects upon Ireland. The exportation of Irish linen for America had been very considerable; but now this great source of national wealth was totally shut up, by an extraordinary stretch of prerogative. Under the pretext of preventing the Americans from being supplied with provisions from Ireland, an embargo was laid on the exportation of provisions from Ireland, which in prejudicing that kingdom, served only to favor the adventures of British contractors. This embargo, combined with other causes, produced the most melancholy effects. Wool and black cattle fell considerably in value, as did also land. The tenants in many places were unable to pay the rents, and public credit was almost extinct. The patriots made several ineffectual attempts to bring ministers to the relief of their suffering country. The ministry proposed to withdraw 4000 troops out of the establishment, though not to be paid by Ireland, whilst they were not employed in that kingdom. To this the Irish objected not. But to the surprize and embarrassment of government, a proposition for introducing 4000 foreign troops, though protestants, into that kingdom was negatived by nearly as large a majority, as that by

1775.



which government questions were usually carried; namely, by 106 against 68. The house followed up their vote with a strong address to his excellency, assuring him, that by their exertions they would render such aid unnecessary for the defence of the realm *.

* 9 Journ. Com. p. 243.

To his Excellency, Simon, Earl Harcourt, Lord-Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland. The humble address of the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses in parliament assembled.

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

“ WE his majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the commons of Ireland, in parliament assembled, deeply impressed with a sense of the many blessings we enjoy under his majesty's government, humbly request, that your excellency will be pleased to assure his majesty of our zeal at all times for the support of his just rights, and for the honor and safety of the British empire. That your excellency will be pleased to express the ready and cheerful concurrence of his majesty's faithful commons in sending out of this kingdom a force not exceeding 4000 men, part of the troops upon this establishment appointed to remain in this kingdom for its defence. That your excellency will be pleased to assure his majesty, that we acknowledge his paternal regard to the ease and relief of this country, manifested in his majesty's most gracious intention, that such part of his army as may be sent out of this kingdom during the present exigency, shall not be continued a charge upon this establishment, so long as they shall remain out of this kingdom. That your excellency will be pleased to return his majesty our most grateful thanks for his gracious declaration, that his majesty hath nothing more at heart than the security and protection of his people of Ireland, of which his majesty has given a signal proof, by his offer, if it shall be the desire of parliament, to replace such forces as may be sent out of this kingdom, by an equal number of Protestant troops, the charge thereof to be de-

1776.

First step
towards the
Irish revolution of
1782.

This conduct of the Irish commons may be considered the first step taken by the representatives of the Irish people towards attaining that state of civil liberty, which was obtained by the nation in what Mr. Burke called their revolution of 1782. The patriots having been supported on some national questions by several on the opposite side of the house, moved several addresses and resolutions strongly descriptive of the oppressed and distracted state of the country, which although they did not carry, yet they perpetuated their sense and feelings upon the subject by recording them on the journals. They particularly complained, that their real grievances were not fairly represented to his majesty, and they boldly assured his excellency, that the representation of them to the King was an indispensable duty incumbent upon him, because the measures, which had perplexed their revenues, increased their debt, and insulted their country, though they must suppose not agreeable to his excellency's sentiments, had all taken place under his administration. Such analogy existed between the

trayed without any expense to this kingdom. And we entreat your excellency, that you will be pleased to assure his majesty, that, fully sensible of his majesty's benevolent attention to his faithful commons, after mature deliberation, they have agreed not to desire that the 4000 troops, which may be sent out of this kingdom in the present exigency, should be replaced, as mentioned in your excellency's message; confiding in the vigilance and care of government, and trusting, that with its assistance, his majesty's loyal people of Ireland may be able so to exert themselves, as to make such aid at this juncture unnecessary."

1776.

cases of Ireland and America, that it became fashionable both in and out of parliament to draw the parallel. The American war never was popular either in Great Britain or Ireland. In the latter, the people assumed the cause of America from sympathy; in the former they abetted it upon principle. Government was seriously alarmed at the honorable light, in which the American struggle was generally viewed *.

* The American dispute very particularly attracted the consideration of the citizens of Dublin. In 1775, the Earl of Effingham, whose regiment was ordered to act against the colonies, resigned his command. The city of Dublin, at the Midsummer quarter assembly, voted him public thanks, "for having consistently with the principles of a true Englishman refused to draw his sword against the lives and liberties of his fellow-subjects in America." Soon after an address of thanks, in fuller terms, was presented to him from the guild of merchants of Dublin: the latter also presented an address of thanks to the several peers, who (as they said) "in support of the constitution, and in opposition to a weak and wicked administration, protested against the American Restraining Bills." They afterwards came to other resolutions, which they prefaced with pointed strictures on those, who in any wise promoted the acts then carrying on in America, as well on account of the injured inhabitants of that country, as of their own brave countrymen, sent on the unnatural errand of killing their fellow-subjects. They resolved, That it was the duty of every good citizen to "exert his utmost abilities to allay the unhappy disputes, that then disturbed the British empire. And that whoever should refuse his consent to a dutiful petition to the king, tending to undeceive his majesty, and by which it could be hoped that the effusion of one drop of subject blood might be prevented, was not a friend to the British constitution." These sympathies of the citizens of Dublin with the cause of America, were common to a great part of the nation, particularly of the north:

and endeavoured to discredit their cause to the utmost. 1777.

The first octennial parliament had scarcely lived four years, when the British cabinet found it expedient, that it should be dissolved. The symptoms of independency and resistance to the British mandates manifested in the last session, alarmed government, and created a diffidence in the steadiness of those, who had enlisted under their new banners. They looked to more passive obedience in a future parliament. Mr. Pery was by the last parliament re-elected speaker. Lord Harcourt never met the new parliament, which was convened in June, 1776, *pro forma*, and by several prorogations went over to the 14th of October, 1777 *. The British cabinet was little satisfied with the administration of Lord Harcourt. The easy and delicate turn of his mind ill qualified him to support, much less to improve upon the late system. Government upon the whole still retained a majority; yet several of their adherents had occasionally, during the last

Parliament dissolved.

* In the intermediate time, (15th February, 1776), Mr. Thomas Townsend, afterwards Lord Sydney, made a motion in the British house of commons, strongly reflecting upon Lord Harcourt, for having in breach of the privileges, and in derogation of the honor and authority of the Irish house of commons, sent a very unconstitutional message to them signed with his own hand. It chiefly regarded the removal of 4000 men from the Irish establishment, and the substitution by foreign troops. It produced a long debate and three divisions upon subsequent motions on the same subject: which were all negatived. The first division was of 224 to 106. This was the general proportion at this time of Lord North's majorities.

1777. session, proved recreant from their instructions ; some had deserted their ranks, many wavered, menaced, and complained of the terms of their engagements. Therefore to invigorate the system some short time before the election of a new parliament, an unusual promotion took place*. Many other engines were in the mean time put in motion for the same purpose†.

* It far exceeded the famous promotion of twelve in the days of Queen Ann. Five viscounts were advanced to earldoms, seven barons to be viscounts, and eighteen new barons were created on the same day. The market terms of such modern peerages were an engagement to support the party of their promoters by their individual votes in the Peers, and by those of their substitutes in the Commons, whose seats were settled before they vacated them upon their promotions.

† About this time, Mr. Sawbridge moved in the British house of commons*, “ that his majesty’s colonies in America be continued upon the same footing of giving and granting their money, as his majesty’s subjects in Ireland were, by their own representatives :” on which occasion, the Honorable Temple Luttrell observed, that whoever had at heart their interests and happiness would provide for them a better constitution, than that of Ireland. A people so wretched, so oppressed, were scarcely to be found in any civilized part of the globe. On this occasion severe allusion was made to the prodigality of lavishing Irish titles on persons unconnected with that kingdom, with particular reference to Lord Macdonald, whose family had no other claim to become hereditary legislators for Ireland, than their prominent zeal for the house of Stuart, in the years 1715 and 1745. The charge of thus depreciating the Irish peerage was defended by Mr. Rigby, merely on the strength of precedent. He had the assurance to add, that if that creation did no good : it would do no harm.

* Viz. on the 10th of May, 1776.

When Lord Buckinghamshire assumed the reins of government, he found the country in deplorable distress. In Dublin the manufacturers would have perished but for contributions and charity. Government was unable to make grants, either to promote industry, or to relieve distress. Every branch of the revenue failed, and such was the poverty of the nation, that the militia law could not be carried into effect. Ireland could not pay her forces abroad, and was obliged to borrow money from England to pay those at home. The ministerial party would not permit any question to be brought forward upon the state of the country in the commons, lest too strong resolutions upon it should be carried, or their opposition to them should appear even too rank for their own system. They had again recourse to the inefficient measure of conveying an imperfect sense of the distressful state of the country through their speaker, to the lord-lieutenant, on presenting the money bills*. The patriots afterwards moved some strong resolutions against the shameful encrease of the pension list.

1777.

Distressed
state of the
nation.

About this time the lord-lieutenant communicated to parliament, that a treaty of amity and commerce had been signed between the court of France and persons employed by his majesty's revolted subjects in North America; and that his majesty relied on the zealous and affectionate support of his faithful people, to repel every insult and attack, and to maintain and

Alliance of
France
with the
American
colonists,
and it's
conse-
quences
upon Ire-
land.

* 9 Com. Journ. 406.

1777.

uphold the power and reputation of his dominions. A motion was immediately made in the commons for an address of thanks; which was followed by a resolution, and an order for raising three hundred thousand pounds by a tontine at 6*l.* per cent. Such was the confidence of government upon the proposal of this loan, that when the patriots, under conviction of the inability of the country to raise it, moved for reducing it to 150,000*l.* the proposed reduction was immediately negatived. However on the 3d of June, Mr. Secretary Heron, in a message to the house of commons from his excellency, admitted the inability of the nation to raise the money. Lord North was not ignorant of the diffusion of the American spirit of liberty through most ranks of people in Ireland. He well knew the fatal effects of former emigrations from that country to America; and that most of the early successes in America were immediately owing to the exertions of Irish emigrants, (chiefly from the north) who bore arms in that cause. With a view therefore of engaging the affections of the Irish people, it was resolved in the British cabinet, that some popular measure for the benefit of Ireland, should be brought forward in each parliament. Still that minister durst not submit them to parliament as government measures, though he allowed freedom of voting to all his adherents*. In the debate of the British house of

* The English house of commons being in a committee to take into consideration the acts of parliament relating to the Irish trade, the Earl of Nugent, after having observed, that from a long


commons upon the commercial concessions to Ireland, upon the strong suggestions of Lord Beauchamp and Mr. T. Townsend to repeal the oppressive code of penal laws against the catholics, Lord North in the most explicit manner declared his cordial wishes, that his majesty's catholic subjects of Ireland should be relieved from what he admitted they complained of with justice: but it was to be effected by the Irish parliament. There, however, bigotry and prejudice still held a sway, though wearing out within the walls of St. Stephen's.

1778.

The policy of relaxing the penal code of the Irish had pervaded not only the British cabinet, but the British senate; not one morose, bigotted, or fanatical voice was heard in discord from the truism ad-

The Irish follows the liberal example of the British parliament towards the Catholics.

series of unshaken loyalty the Irish were entitled to every encouragement, which good and faithful subjects could deserve, and a wise and grateful government could give, moved, that the Irish might be permitted to send on board of British vessels, navigated according to law, to the coast of Africa, and our settlements abroad, all sorts of Irish manufactures, (wool and woollen clothes excepted). Then, that the Irish might be permitted to import all sorts of ware and merchandize from the coast of Africa, and plantations abroad, (indigo, tobacco, and sugar only excepted). The word sugar was inserted by his lordship, merely to prevent an opposition from the West India merchants; but on the motion of Lord Newhaven, it was left out, and the motion passed *nem. con.* He also moved, that glass manufactured in Ireland might be exported by the Irish, (except into Great Britain); and that Irish cotton might be imported duty free into Great Britain. The motions passed unanimously. Mr. Burke then moved, that sail-cloth might be imported into this kingdom duty free. This motion likewise passed *nem. con.* 8 Eng. Deb. 206, &c.

1778.  vanced by Mr. Burke on Lord Nugent's first motion for a committee to consider the trade of Ireland, *That Ireland was now the chief dependance of the British crown, and that it particularly behoved this country to admit the Irish nation to the privileges of British citizens**. On the eleventh day after the British house of commons had given the liberal example of universal assent to Sir George Savile's motion in favor of the Roman Catholics of England, Mr. Gardiner on the 25th of May, 1778, moved in the Irish house of commons for heads of a bill for the relief of his majesty's Roman Catholic subjects of Ireland; it was carried in the affirmative†.

The application of the Dissenters for indulgence remitted to another session.

At the same time the Presbyterians of Ireland bearing in mind, that the sacramental test had been imposed upon their ancestors by their lying by, when new severities were imposed upon their catholic brethren, came forward on this occasion to avail themselves of the first symptoms of tolerancy in an Irish parliament. In order not to be excluded from the indulgencies about to be dispensed to the Catholics, Sir Edward Newnham on the same day moved, that leave might be given to bring in heads of a bill for the relief of his majesty's subjects the Protestant Dissenters of that kingdom. But whether from conviction, that relief to the Dissenters was not of equal urgency with that proposed to be granted to the Roman Catholics, or

* 8 Eng. Deb. p. 185. viz. 1 April, 1778.

† Journ. Com. p. 475. The division is not given in the Journals.

that the British cabinet had hitherto expressed no opinion or inclination in their favor, the measure was remitted to another session.

1778.

The preamble of Mr. Gardiner's act contained assertions, which some few years back it would have been considered little short of treason to have advanced: namely, that the severities of the act of Ann ought to be relaxed, that the catholics of Ireland were excluded from and ought to be admitted to the blessings of our free constitution, and that it would promote the prosperity and strength of all his majesty's dominions, that the catholics should be bounden to the protestants by mutual interest and affection*. The purport of the act was, that any catholic subscribing the oath of allegiance and declaration prescribed by the 13th and 14th of Geo. III. c. 35. might take, enjoy, and dispose of a lease for 999 years certain, or determinable on the dropping of five lives; that the lands then possessed by catholics should in future be descendible, deviseable, or alienable as fully as if they were in the possession of any other subject of his majesty: and that it should no longer be in the power of a child to fly in the face of his parent by demanding a present maintenance out of the father's personal estate, or by depriving him totally of the inheritance of his real estate, as he before had been enabled to do by the 2d Ann. After a severe contest of eight divisions,

Mr. Gardiner's act.

* 17 and 18 Geo. III. c. 49. An act for the relief of his majesty's subjects of this kingdom professing the popish religion.

1778.



with the unequivocal approbation of government, the general support of the patriots, and the example of unanimity in the British legislature for a similar indulgence to the catholics of England, were the heads of this bill carried through the Irish house of commons by the small majority of nine. In the lords, it was carried by a majority of two-thirds. The session closed in August, with a flattering speech from the lord-lieutenant. The relief, which the distresses of Ireland had roused the British parliament to afford to their commerce, worked the selfish and illiberal prejudices of Liverpool, Manchester, and Glasgow, almost to rebellion. * Mr. Burke triumphantly refuted all arguments against the bill. He would not by describing the situation of his country, engage the humanity of the house in her favour. The people of Ireland would not accept favours from humanity. They called for justice, not for pity. They requested Britain to be wise, not generous; to provide for her own good, and secure her own interest.

Message from the crown to ease Ireland of the payment of her troops serving out of the kingdom.

In melancholy confirmation of the distressed state of Ireland, Lord North communicated to the British commons a message from his Majesty†, recommending, on that account, that the charge of the regiments on the Irish establishment then serving out of that kingdom should be paid by Great Britain. This pro-

* In the affairs of Ireland Mr. Burke ever evinced the most accurate historical knowledge, an unbiassed judgment, and even to the last a most constitutional spirit.

† 11 Parl. Deb. p. 177.

1779.

duced a debate very interesting to the welfare of Ireland *. Several questions of the highest importance to that country were warmly debated in both houses during the session, but were defeated by large majorities. The Irish were highly exasperated, that the British had abandoned their cause. Their discontents became alarming. Associations were entered into against the importation of British commodities, and for the encouragement of Irish manufactures. At Dublin they published resolutions, that the unjust, illiberal, and impolitic opposition given by many self-interested people of Great Britain, to the proposed encouragement of the trade and commerce of this kingdom, originated in avarice and ingratitude. And that they would not import or use any goods or wares from Great Britain, till she entertained sentiments of respect and affection for her fellow-subjects of Ireland. Similar resolutions passed at Waterford, and generally throughout the kingdom. In consequence of which the manufactures of Ireland began to revive, and the demand for British goods to decrease. This produced a disposition in Great Britain to attend, for the first time, to the complaints of Ireland.

It was the unwise policy of government not to convene the parliament of Ireland in the pressure of its national distress. The ministry in Great Britain was frequently called upon by the opposition to account

The long recess gives rise to the volunteers

* The substance of these debates very intimately affects the situation of Ireland at that period, and may be seen in my *Historical Review*, p. 467 to 484.

1779. for that extraordinary conduct. No answer was given. The unusual length of the recess, the refusal of the British parliament to afford redress, and the want of an Irish parliament to apply to, gave rise to the exertions of those native energies, to which an oppressed and injured people never fails in extremity to resort. During this recess the system of volunteering took its rise, and had made considerable progress before the parliament met on the 12th of October, 1779.

Mr. Grattan
opposes the
speech of
the lord-
lieutenant.

Mr. Grattan* opposed the speech, as containing nothing explicit, nothing satisfactory. Were the people of Ireland undeserving the notice of the British ministers? It was plain they had nothing to expect, since applications from the people, backed even by the officers of their own, were not attended to. Ireland then had nothing to depend upon but her own spirit; no redress of grievances, no extension of trade, but from the efforts of her people! and would it be safe

* This being the first occasion of referring to Mr. Grattan in this History, the author seizes the opportunity of observing, that the compendious form of this work precludes the possibility of giving even a faint idea of the stupendous powers of his oratory, which is better calculated to command the admiration of the latest posterity than that of any modern orator. His speeches often surpass the finest pieces of ancient Greece and Rome. Ireland may proudly boast of having in him produced the sublimest orator and most virtuous patriot of latter ages. The Historical Review, from this period to its close, contains ample extracts from his speeches, as the most just and striking representation of the great national features, which characterized the last thirty years of the history of Ireland. To them the author most confidently refers his reader.

there or elsewhere, to oppose these efforts? The distresses of Ireland were twofold, the beggary of the people, and the bankruptcy of the state. He moved an amendment, which strongly painted the distressed situation of the country, and that the only resource left to support their expiring trade, was to open a free export trade, and let his Majesty's Irish subjects enjoy their natural birthright. Not only the leading patriots on this occasion, but several of the servants of the crown*, were for the amendment. Mr. Prime Serjeant (Hussey Burgh†) after expatiating on the necessity of immediately laying the state of their distresses at the foot of the throne, moved, in lieu of Mr. Grattan's amendment, "that it is not by temporary expedients, but by a free trade alone, that this nation is now to be saved from impending ruin;" which was unanimously assented to.

1779.



The distresses of Ireland and the impotency of government produced the most important change of dis-

Effects of the weak administration of Lord Buckinghamshire.

* The Rt. Hon. Henry Flood declared for the amendment, and entered largely into a justification of his political conduct, which, he said, had unfortunately been much misrepresented; that the office he held was the unsolicited gift of his sovereign, which he had received with gratitude, and held with honour: that when the time should come, when he could no longer do so, he would gladly throw the bracelet into the common caldron.

† The talents and amiable attainments of this gentleman gave some plausibility and confidence to the weak, though not harsh, administration of Lord Buckinghamshire. There was pitiful finesse in the ministerialists taking out of the hands of Mr. Grattan this necessary amendment, in order to substitute another of like tendency.

1779. position, sentiment, and action in the people. The British fleets had become inferior to the combined forces of the enemy: their coasts were insulted, those of Ireland wholly unprotected: the military establishment drained to recruit the regiments in America, had not left 5000 forces in that kingdom to defend the sea-ports from the crews of single vessels. Hence arose the necessity of volunteers arming in-defence of their abandoned country. Government affrighted at the situation, into which they had thrown or permitted the country to be thrown, delivered out to the people 16,000 stand of arms, thereby encouraging and increasing the number of volunteers, without any stipulation, regulation, or authority for organizing or subjecting them to subordination. The commercial face of the country exhibited a still more desponding view: her vessels taken within sight of her ports: her trade shackled in almost every branch by British restrictions: an embargo on the exports of her provision trade: her linens lying upon her merchants' hands: her imports and her absentees swallowing up all her currency: and slight or no returns to supply an exhausted treasury. This complicated wretchedness of the country once more dissolved the ministerial phalanx, and imperiously called some of it's staunchest supporters to quit their ranks, and vote for a *free trade*. The nation poured forth its gratitude to parliament; which in it's turn paid it's tribute of thanks to the volunteers, who now amounted to 42,000 men. This formidable body, armed and organized by no other authority, than the great law of self-defence, was

never even questioned by the Irish government or parliament as to the legality of their commission or delegation. Government had so wasted its vigour, that it could not raise its arm in self-defence. During this debate the populace assembled round the parliament house, and with full impunity menaced the members, and demanded oaths of them to support the measure, committing several acts of outrage and intimidation*.

1779.

About a month after the Irish parliament had been convened, Lord Shelburne moved in the British house of lords, that his Majesty might be addressed to take into reconsideration the two motions for procuring relief to Ireland, which in the preceding session had been rejected by large majorities, and that his Majesty would be pleased to direct effectual redress to his suffering people. His lordship forcibly represented Ireland so imperiously shut out from all prospect of justice or relief, that she must perish, or work out her own salvation. She was then united as one man to rescue herself from approaching destruction. The people had armed themselves, and the numbers armed exceeded

State of Ireland debated in the British house of lords.

* To this juncture did the late Lord Clare refer in his memorable speech on the Union (p. 29), when he said, "The imbecility of Lord Buckinghamshire's government had arrayed the volunteer army, and the address to his Majesty voted in 1779 by the commons, demanding *a free trade as the right of Ireland*, was followed instantly by a resolution of thanks to that army for their array." When the speaker carried up the address to the lord-lieutenant, the streets, from the parliament-house to the castle, were lined by the Dublin volunteers, commanded by the Duke of Leinster, drawn up in their arms and uniform.

1779. forty thousand, and were daily augmenting. This formidable body was not composed of mercenaries, who had little or no interest in the issue, but of the nobility, gentry, merchants, citizens, and respectable yeomanry: men able and willing to devote their time, and part of their property, to the defence of the whole, and the protection and security of their country. The government had been abdicated, and the people resumed the powers vested in them; and in so doing, were fully authorized by every principle of the constitution, and every motive of self-preservation; and whenever they should again delegate this inherent power, they firmly and wisely determined to have it so regulated, and placed upon so large and liberal a basis, that they should not be liable to suffer under the same oppressions in time to come; nor feel the fatal effects and complicated evils of mal-administration; of calamity without hopes of redress; or of iron-handed power without protection. Both houses of the Irish parliament had declared, that nothing but granting the kingdom "a free trade," could save it from certain ruin: a declaration conveyed through its proper constitutional organs, both houses of parliament, to his Majesty, against which there was but one dissenting voice in the houses*, and not a second in the kingdom. His lordship closed with moving a strong reso-

* Viz. Lord chancellor Lifford; to whom it is but justice to observe, that he honestly stated his reason for dissenting, "that he could never join in a vote of thanks as a peer of parliament, or a lawyer, to any set of men, be their motives ever so laudable or patriotic, who were acting in a military capacity against law."

1779.


lution, importing, that it was highly criminal in his Majesty's ministers to have neglected taking effectual measures for the relief of Ireland, and suffered the discontents of that kingdom to rise to such an height, as evidently to endanger the constitutional connection between the two kingdoms, and to create new embarrassments to the public councils, by disunion and diffidence, in a moment when real unanimity, grounded upon mutual confidence and affection, was confessedly essential to the preservation of what was left of the British empire. The Earl of Hillsborough* admitted, that Ireland was entitled to a free trade with equal taxes; and he thought himself warranted in recommending to his Majesty, and proposing to parliament, to grant it; which he hoped, would give perfect satisfaction and content to both nations. Earl Gower†, in this debate, with manly firmness, avowed, that all his efforts for the relief of Ireland had proved unfruitful. He had presided, he said, for some years at the council table, and had seen such things pass there of late, that no man of honour or conscience could any longer sit there. The times were such as called upon every man to speak out: the situations of the two kingdoms required sincerity and activity in council. Lord Cambden, and several other lords, spoke warmly in favour of Ireland; but the question was negatived by a majority of 82 against 37.

* The grandfather of the present Marquis of Downshire.

† The father of the present Marquis of Stafford.

1779.

The affairs
of Ireland
debated in
the British
house of
commons.

The same subject was debated with more warmth in the British house of commons, than in the peers but with the like effect. Lord Upper Ossory* moved by way of resolution, the substance of what had been moved by Lord Shelburne in the peers. In neither house of the British parliament were the desperate distress and calamity of Ireland even doubted: all were of accord as to the existence of the evil: the only differences were, who had created, and who had countenanced or fomented, who had negatively or positively given continuance to it, and how was it then to be remedied†.

* 15 Parl. Debates, p. 99.

† The volunteer uncommissioned army of Ireland was so extraordinary a phenomenon, that the reader may be gratified with the opinion of a great departed statesman upon it. In the debate on Lord Ossory's motion, Mr. Fox was firm and explicit (15 Parl. Deb. p. 129). "The Irish associations had been called illegal; legal or illegal he declared he entirely approved of them. He approved of that manly determination, which, in the dernier resort, flies to arms in order to obtain deliverance. When the last particle of good faith in men is exhausted, they will seek in themselves the means of redress; they will recur to first principles, to the spirit as well as letter of the constitution, and they can never fail in such resources, though the law may literally condemn such a departure from its general and unqualified rules: truth, justice, and public virtue, accompanied with prudence and judgment, will ever bear up good men in a good cause, that of private protection. God knew, that he sincerely lamented the cause, which produced this sad, he could not but say, this perplexing and humiliating alternative. He most heartily lamented, that any cause had been administered, which seemed to justify violence or resistance; he dreaded the consequences, however justifiable in their origin,

In the Irish senate the voice of patriotism reached even the ministerial side of the house. They spiritedly resolved to grant the supply only for six months. This short money bill was transmitted to England, where, however mortifying to the ministers, it was reluctantly passed. The house, likewise, unanimously entered into several resolutions to promote the commerce of Ireland.

1779.

Change of feelings in the Irish commons.

So determined was the Irish house of commons to assert their rights, and bring the British government and parliament into a full recognition of them, that they carried, by a majority of 170 to 47*, a resolution, that at this time it would be inexpedient to grant new taxes. Immediately after this unequivocal test of the disposition of the Irish house of commons was known in England, the British house of commons being in a committee on the affairs of Ireland, Lord North opened his three propositions relative to the allowing Ireland a free export of wool, woollens, and wool flocks, a free exportation of glass, and all kinds of glass manufactures, and a freedom of trade with the British plantations on certain conditions, the basis of which was to be an equality of taxes and customs upon an equal and

Resolution of the Irish commons brings the British parliament to grant the Irish propositions.

or moderately or judiciously conducted: but whatever the effects might be, he was ready to acknowledge, that such a power was inherent in men; as men and citizens it was a sacred trust in their hands, as a defence against the possible or actual abuse of power, political treachery, and the arts and intrigues of government; and when all other means failed, resistance, he should ever hold, as perfectly justifiable."

* 10 Com, Journ. p. 34.

1779. unrestrained trade. The minister stated the propriety and justice, as well as the necessity, of affording relief to Ireland, and expatiated on the mutual and respective interests of both countries. Bills founded on the two first propositions were brought in, passed both houses with the utmost facility, and received the royal assent before the recess. The third being more complex in its nature, was suffered to lie over during the approaching holidays in its state of an open proposition, to afford time for consideration in England, and to acquire knowledge of the effect, which the measure was likely to produce in Ireland.

Effects of
the Irish
volunteers.

In this alarming crisis, Ireland looked for redress more to the armed associations, than to parliament. Hitherto, these bodies had acted only in detached companies. They now formed themselves into battalions on a system of regular communication. For some time had the original cause of the volunteers arming in self-defence against a foreign enemy been sunk into the more interesting object of asserting their constitutional independent rights, and procuring a free and open trade for their country. In the year 1778, the armed associations in Ireland amounted to 30,000 men: they had been regularly increasing from that period: they clad and armed themselves voluntarily; they cheerfully learned the use of arms, and freely submitted to the severest discipline: but their transcendant attention was to instil into each other an uniformity of political sentiment and determination not to quit their arms, till they should have accomplished the complete liberation of their country from the sove-

1780.

reignty of the British parliament. In the beginning of the year 1780, they entered upon the plan of general organization: they appointed reviews for the ensuing summer; and chose their exercising officers and reviewing generals. Thus was laid the foundation of Irish union. They openly declared their opinions upon the state of public affairs; the newspapers teemed with resolutions of the different corps, all in unison declaring, that Ireland was an independent kingdom, and fully entitled to all the uncontrouled rights, privileges, and immunities of a free constitution: that no power on earth but the king, lords, and commons of Ireland could make laws to bind them: and that they were ready with their lives and fortunes to resist the usurpations and encroachments of any foreign legislature. The government, and their parliamentary majority, were alarmed at, and consequently inimical to the propositions. Mr. Grattan however, on the 19th of April, 1780, after a most animated speech, moved, that the house should resolve and enter on its Journals, *That no power on earth, save the King, lords, and commons of Ireland, had a right to make laws for Ireland.* After a most interesting debate, that lasted till six o'clock in the morning, in which every man but one, acknowledged its truth, either expressly, or by not opposing it, Mr. Flood, who well knew that the ministerial members were committed to negative the motion, if it came to a division, recommended, that no question should be put, and no appearance of the business entered on the Journals; to which Mr. Grattan consented.

1780.

Commons
vote a longer
money bill.

Upon the appearance of some sincerity in the British cabinet and parliament, the Irish house of commons proceeded to take into serious consideration, the regulations necessary to place the commerce of the kingdom on a footing of stability. The supplies were granted for a year and a half longer; and 260,000*l.* were ordered to be raised by treasury bills, or by a lottery, as the lord-lieutenant should direct*. On presenting the money bills, Mr. Pery, the speaker†, made a speech to the lord-lieutenant, which was highly satisfactory to all parties.

Imprudent
conduct of
government
to Ireland.

The general joy upon the prospect of a free trade, was but of short duration. Upon maturer consideration, the commercial interest in Ireland was dissatisfied with the proposed system of equalizing the duties between the sister kingdoms; and the British ministry most imprudently inflamed a nation with arms in her hands, determined to assert her undefeasible rights. The bill for punishing mutiny and desertion in the army for a limited time, had been transmitted, as usual, and was returned with the most alarming alteration from the English privy-council: it was made *perpetual*: material alterations were also made in one of the commercial bills relating to the article of sugars. Discontent ran through the kingdom. The borough of Newrey presented a petition to the commons against both alterations. Several other petitions were also pre-

* This was the first time, that the mischievous expedient of a lottery was resorted to in Ireland.

† 10 Journ. Com. p. 142.

sented to the like purport. Government, however, 1780.
in defiance of the struggle of the patriots, passed the
altered mutiny bill by a majority of 69 against 25.
Against these proceedings in parliament the mer-
chants' corps of volunteers, convened at the Royal
Exchange, Dublin, passed very strong resolutions,
which were printed in the public papers. Similar re-
solutions were entered into by many other volunteer
bodies.

The language holden by the popular prints, be-
spoke, as well as increased the general discontent. Increase of
popular dis-
content.
The most popular prints were most obnoxious to
government. The house of commons passed a
vote of censure against the printers and publishers
of these papers *, and addressed the lord-lieute-
nant to give orders for effectually prosecuting them,
and also the authors and contrivers of certain ar-
ticles contained in them. This vote of censure was
indirectly aimed by the ministry at the volunteer
corps, whose influence had become so alarming to
government, that it was found prudent not to cast
direct censure upon any of them. The people were
on one hand encouraged by popular publications to
insist upon their independence; on the other they
were goaded into irritation, by the determined opposi-
tion given to it in parliament. They were incensed at
Mr. Grattan's resolution against foreign legislation not
having found admission into the Journals; provoked at
Mr. Yelverton's failure in procuring a modification of

* 10 Journ. Com. p. 195.

1780.

Poyning's law: and irritated at the ineffectual effort of Mr. Forbes, to procure a bill for the independence of the judges. They were desperate in the conviction, that a majority in their own parliament had been purchased with the wealth of Ireland, to negative every question tending to promote their national independence.

Close of the
session.

The session had been protracted to an unusual length; when, on the 2d of September, 1780, Lord Buckinghamshire put an end to it, by a most gracious speech from the throne. He had on the preceding day been addressed in a very adulatory style by the commons; and the return of the incense appears upon the face of his address to both houses of parliament*. Thus ended a session, that had promised in its opening the brightest prospects to Ireland. The disappointed people felt, and expressed their resentment. It was Lord Buckinghamshire's fate to be disapproved of by the ministers of England, as well as to have dissatisfied the people of Ireland. The volunteers had intimidated the British ministry. They condemned Lord Buckinghamshire for effects, which it was not in his power to prevent; and which, in fact, were to be immediately traced to their own dilatory, irresolute, and pernicious councils. Lord Buckinghamshire was recalled, and Lord Carlisle† appointed in his stead on the 23d of December, 1780.

* The speech is to be seen in my Hist. Review, vol. I. p. 519.

† Lord Carlisle took over with him as secretary, his protégé and friend Mr. Eden, (now Lord Auckland) who had published several letters upon political subjects to his patron; and amongst others, one on *The Representations of Ireland respecting a free*

* In February, 1781, on Mr. Jenkinson's motion in the British house of commons, for the further consideration of the report on the Mutiny Bill, Mr. Fox moved for its recommitment†, and he prefaced his

1781.
Adminis-
tration of
Lord Car-
lisle. De-
bate in the
British
commons.

Trade, of which Mr. Dobbs, (in his *History of Irish Affairs*, p. 42.) writes thus: "From a letter written by Mr. Eden, the secretary to Lord Carlisle, on the subject of Irish affairs, and which had been answered by Counsellor Richard Sheridan, we had no great reason to rejoice in this change."

* 1 Parl. Deb. p. 522.

† 1 Parl. Deb. p. 433. Mr. Jenkinson, secretary at war, informed the house, that there were some alterations made in the Mutiny Act, two of which being material, he thought it right to state what they were, as no alteration ought to be made in an act of so much importance, without the concurrence of the house. The first alteration was the total omission of the word "Ireland," in the act; an omission, which the learned gentleman appointed to draw up and prepare the bill had judged proper, because the Irish legislature had last year introduced clauses in their Mutiny Act, tending to govern and regulate the management of the quartering of soldiers, and other matters relative to military discipline, when at a distance from the capital; the continuing to extend the British Mutiny Act to Ireland was therefore no longer necessary.

Sir George Yonge said, that what the secretary at war had dropped concerning the omission of the word "Ireland" in the bill, appeared to him to be of very serious importance, and required very mature consideration before it was agreed to. If it were intended, that this country should give up all claim to legislation over Ireland, he thought it would be better to declare such an intention, and do it at once. He could never approve of the idea of giving it up bit by bit, by incidental acts of parliament. He therefore wished the house would not hastily settle the question, but go into it, examine it with the attention due to its importance, and make a solemn decision upon the subject.

1781.

motion by a speech replete with that genuine constitutional doctrine, for which he was always supereminently distinguished. He emphatically warned the honourable gentleman, that prudence ought at all times to be consulted in measures of dignity, and that they ought not to assert powers of authority at a season, when from weakness they were not able to support their claim. To agitate a question of supremacy over the sister kingdom, when that kingdom was disposed to resist the principle, could but be dangerous, when the country was involved in calamity, and threatened with decisive ruin. The weakness of administration, in refusing her calm and sober requests, had forced America to combat these powers; and in Ireland they had not been questioned, till relief had been denied to her manifest grievances. He complained of a conspiracy to give a mutiny bill of their own to Ireland, in return for a grant from Ireland of a perpetual army to the crown: a thing wholly unwarranted by the constitution. It was alarming, that in the Irish mutiny bill, the preamble, which recited the declaration of rights equally applicable to both countries was omitted, because the words, *Whereas it is illegal in the crown to keep a standing army in times of peace*, were in direct contradiction to the bill, which had been granted. Their associations had done more in a moment, than all the effects of friendship in their favour. All false reasoning had vanished; all little partial motives of resistance had ceased; local considerations died away instantly,

and the noble lord in the blue ribbon, who had shewn himself the last man to listen to supplication, was the first man to give way to force.

1781.

* In October, 1781, the Earl of Carlisle met the parliament, when after the common place recommendations of the charter schools, linen trade, tillage, fisheries, and general commerce of the country, his excellency assured them, that his majesty ardently wished the happiness of his people of Ireland, in whose affection and loyalty he placed the firmest reliance. It had now become notorious, that government wished to check and disarm the volunteers, but were frightened into acquiescence; they had reluctantly distributed amongst them 16,000 stand of arms, and they were now compelled to court the power they could not control. In the debate upon the address Mr. Grattan took notice of the extreme caution, with which the address avoided mentioning the word *volunteer*; that wholesome and salutary appellation, which he wished to familiarise to the royal ear. Mr. O'Neil then moved, that the thanks of the house should be given to all the volunteers of Ireland, for their unremitted exertions, and for their loyal and spirited declarations on the late expected invasion, which, with the exception of Mr. Fitzgibbon†, and Mr. Scott‡, who afterwards withdrew their objections, passed with the most hearty and unanimous good will. Mr. Brad-

Lord Carlisle meets the parliament. Its first proceedings.

* 10 Journ. Comm. p. 210.

† Afterwards Earl of Clare.

‡ Then attorney-general, and afterwards Lord Clonmel.

1781.

street, the recorder of Dublin, a staunch patriot, moved * for leave to bring in heads of an *Habeas Corpus Bill*, observing, that the liberty of Ireland was insecure until an *Habeas Corpus Act* should take place, as in England. Sir Lucius O'Bryen called the attention of the house to their freedom of trade with Portugal, where goods of Irish manufacture had been stopped, and were not permitted to be sold, which subject Mr. Yelverton† complained had been designedly omitted in the speech. On the subsequent day, Mr. Yelverton gave notice, that immediately after the recess, he should move the house for leave to bring in heads of a bill to regulate the transmission of bills from that kingdom to England. At that time, their constitution was the constitution of England inverted. Bills originated with the British minister; and with that house it only remained to register, or reject them. Such was the miserable state of Ireland, and in that state it would remain, as long as a monster, unknown to the constitution, a British attorney-general, through the influence of a law of Poyning's, had power to alter their bills. The mischief of this had been recently manifested in an altered sugar bill, which had nearly annihilated their trade to the West-Indies.

State of
parties at
this juncture
in Ire-
land.

The activity of the Castle to ensure a majority in parliament endeavoured to keep pace with the increase of patriotism without. The people had arms, knew their use, and had resolved not to quit them,

* 1 Parl. Debates, p. 10.

† Afterwards Lord Avonmore.

till they had attained the object of their wishes, a free and independent constitution. Administration confiding in its number, set all the patriots at defiance. They beheld ministers with indignation, and considered them in fact the only enemy, they had to encounter in Ireland. Mr. Eden was a man of information and talent, and conducted the business of parliament widely different from his predecessor in that office. Yet such was then the prejudice against every thing British, that scarcely a debate occurred, in which severe reflections were not thrown on the lord-lieutenant and his secretary's partiality for England. During Lord Carlisle's administration, the numbers of the two parties in the house of commons continued nearly as they had been left by his predecessor. Some of the leading men of each party shifted sides. Early in the session *, Mr. Flood declared, that the fate of the nation depended on the motion then before the house (for going into the consideration of the Portugal trade): that they should not trust any minister, that countenanced a perpetual mutiny bill: and that they would be execrated by posterity, if they abandoned that motion †. On the other hand, Mr. George Ponsonby declared, that as he saw the minister acting obviously for the interest of Ireland, he thought it his duty to support him; and he would ever assist him while he acted upon the same principle. But the debate, which brought forth Mr. Flood in full opposition to

1781.

* Viz. on the 1st of Nov. 1781—1 Parl. Debates, p. 30.

† It was negatived by a majority of 117 against 44. 1 Parl. Debates, p. 30.

1781.

the minister, was on the supplies, which involved the question upon the state of the nation *.

Debate on
mutiny
bill.

On the 13th of November, 1781, Mr. Grattan made a motion for bringing in heads of a bill to explain, amend, and limit an act to prevent mutiny and desertion in the army; which was seconded by Mr. Flood. On this occasion some few of the more independent members of the ministerial party sided with the opposition; the division being 77 for and 123 against the motion. Mr. Eden said, as a servant of the public, he was determined, at all times, to guard against the enthusiasm of the day, whatever it might be. He had found the mutiny law recently established by large majorities; the execution of it had passed immediately through his hands, almost from its commencement; and he had found it full of expediency, and void of mischief. He would therefore resist the motion.

Mr. Yel-
verton
moves for
an address
to the
throne.

Upon receipt of the melancholy news of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis's army to the French in America, Mr. Yelverton, after a very impressive speech †, moved, for an address to express their loyalty and attachment to his majesty's royal person, family, and government, and to assure his majesty that they held it to be their indispensable duty, as it was their hearty inclination to support his majesty to

* Mr. Flood's conduct, personal feeling, and much of his speech on the loss of his place, and in reply to observations on his change, may be seen, *Historical Review*, p. 537, &c. vol. I.

† 1 *Parl. Deb.* p. 124. This speech of Mr. Yelverton is fraught with that patriotic and constitutional spirit, which on all national subjects he never failed to display,

the utmost of their abilities, and to restore the blessings of a lasting and honorable peace. Several friends of Mr. Yelverton's conceiving, that his motion might commit them in an approbation of the American war, declined supporting it: the question however was carried by a majority of 167 against 37.

1781.


On the 7th of December Mr. Grattan being called to by the house, rose to state to them the financial situation of the country; but previously intreated them not to give a *rake's* ear to a subject necessary for their consideration, though painful to their patience. He stated their debt, including annuities, at 2,667,600*l.*; which he observed had not been accumulated by directing the artillery of their arms against a foreign enemy, but by directing the artillery of the treasury against their constitution; it was a debt of patronage and prostitution. After a minute investigation into, and a severe invective against every species of venality, unaccountable waste, and ill-directed profusion, he moved for a committee to examine the expences of the nation, and to consider of such retrenchments as should seem necessary. Mr. Foster undertook the bold task of refuting every position of Mr. Grattan.

Mr. Grattan's motion for an examination of the national expences.

On the 11th of December, * Mr. Flood entered upon the important subject of Poyning's law, with

Mr. Flood's motion for the explanation of Poyning's law.

* Parl. Debates, p. 153. Mr. Flood's speech on this important law to Ireland, is a most solid and explicit statement of the nature, spirit, and operation of it; and the best historical clue to the development of the many political manœuvres carried on under its sanction. His argument is fully given, Hist. Review, vol. I. 560, &c.

1781.  great erudition and eloquence. He concluded with observing, that the law was not in fault; the vile interpreter only was to be blamed. An interpreter (the English attorney-general), placed between the king and people: a monster unknown to the constitution, whose office was to stifle the voice of the people, and to prevent the king from hearing; to render the people dumb, and the king deaf. In order therefore to restore the constitution to its native vigour, and to obviate the evil effects of misinterpretation, he moved two resolutions, viz. That a committee be appointed to examine the precedents and records that day produced, and such others, as might be necessary to explain Poyning's law. If that were granted, he would follow it with a declaration from the report of that committee, what the law of Poyning, and what the constitution of that country actually were. The Provost answered Mr. Flood in a very learned and temperate speech. The attorney-general opposed him with more than his usual vehemence. At a late hour Mr. Flood's first resolution was negatived, by a majority of 139 against 67.

Mr. Gardiner introduces the subject of catholic relief.

Mr. Luke Gardiner*, from his observations on the spirit of toleration throughout the continent, lamented that Ireland was the most intolerant country in all Europe, which he considered as a high disgrace to the reformed religion. † On the 13th of December, 1781, a conversation took place on the heads of a bill for giving

* Afterwards Lord Mountjoy.

† 1 Parl. Deb. p. 175.

1782.


further relief to his Majesty's subjects of Ireland professing the Roman Catholic religion, when Mr. Gardiner said, that he was taking the utmost pains to bring it forward in such a shape, as would render it acceptable to every gentleman in the house, as in a case of such great importance unanimity was earnestly to be desired. Several objections were taken to the time, to the nature of the concession, and to the inflamed state of the public mind. It went no further than conversation. The house of commons met for the last time before their adjournment on Christmas-day, when Mr. Gardiner observed, that as many members had expressed their anxiety to know the purport of his intended bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics, and as the house had given no orders for printing it, he would have it printed and distributed at his own expence, that gentlemen might have an opportunity of maturely considering it during the recess. On that occasion Mr. Grattan observed, that it was allowed on all sides, that some indulgence should be granted to the Roman Catholics. He wished the house to do it handsomely, for the merits and sufferings of the Roman Catholics claimed it from them. They were not to be judged by their creed, as understood by their adversaries: their actions proved them dutiful and loyal.

On 31st of January, 1782, Mr. Gardiner gave notice of his intention to bring in heads of a bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics in Ireland*. The Hon.

Mr. Gardiner gives notice of the heads of his bill.

* 1 Parl. Deb. p. 199.

1782.

John Burke opposed the introduction of a bill, that would abolish all the restraints, which the wisdom of their ancestors had laid upon that people. Leave was given however, without further opposition, to bring them in. On the 5th of February, Mr. Gardiner being indisposed, Mr. Dillon presented heads of a bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics, which brought on a debate, in which several other leading members of the house declared their sentiments in favour of them. But on the order of the day for going into the bill, a conversation took place upon the propriety of its being then committed, when the house, which was uncommonly crowded with strangers, was appalled by Mr. Fitzgibbon's apprising them*, that till that morning he had never considered the bill as dangerous; but on reading it over carefully, the first clause struck him as a repeal of the Act of Settlement, the Act of Forfeiture, and the Act of Resumption; that if so, it must destroy the new titles under the Popery laws, and entangle the whole kingdom in a maze of confusion. He therefore intreated the friends of the bill to agree with him in putting it off, till those doubts should be done away; or till that clause could be modified, so as to grant relief to the catholics without injuring the persons holding under the new titles. Even the attorney-general consented to commit the bill, to shew the people, that the house was sincere, and fully resolved to give them the utmost, that could safely be

* 1 Parl. Deb. p. 241.

granted. The house then went into a committee, when the bill was read, and the further consideration of it adjourned to a near day. Mr. Fitzgibbon abandoned his opinion, which had given the alarm.

1782.

The great body of the people had arms in their hands, and freedom in their hearts; they were rising gradually into the use of arms, were organized into discipline, and united in one common object, the determination to attain legislative independence. The officers of the southern battalion of Lord Charlemont's Armagh regiment, took the lead, and gave movement to the important measures of the volunteer army: they met and came to * resolutions, which

Conduct
and resolu-
tions of the
volunteers.

* As Ireland owes so much to the Volunteers, the reader may be desirous to know the nature and spirit of their first public meeting. The following resolutions gave rise to all their future operations.

“First Ulster Regiment, commanded by the Earl of Charlemont.

“At a full meeting, holden at Armagh, on Friday, the 26th day of December, 1781, of the officers and delegates of the southern battalion of the said regiment, consisting of eleven companies, pursuant to adjournment.

“Francis Evans, Esq. in the chair. The following resolutions were unanimously agreed to, and ordered to be printed in all the newspapers published within the province of Ulster, and in the Volunteer Journal of the City of Dublin.

“Resolved, That with the utmost concern, we behold the little attention paid to the constitutional rights of this kingdom, by the majority of those, whose duty it is to establish and preserve the same.

“Resolved, That to avert the impending danger from the nation, and to restore the constitution to its original purity, the most vigorous and effectual methods must be pursued, to root out corruption and court influence from the legislative body.

1782.

they published throughout the province of Ulster and in Dublin.

First meeting of the volunteers.

The meeting, in consequence of this requisition, was one of the most important transactions in the modern annals of Ireland. As soon as this bold call appeared, the Castle took the alarm. Captain Evans was the ostensible man, but to take him up might bring things to immediate extremities; to take no notice of it might be dangerous; a middle course was determined on, and every possible means were used to suppress the meeting: the words of the requisition were animadverted on; and many, even of the best friends of Ireland, wished no meeting had been called. As the awful 15th day of February, 1782, approach-

“ *Resolved*, That to open a path towards the attaining this desirable point, it is absolutely requisite that a meeting be held in the most central town in the province of Ulster, which we conceive to be Dungannon, to which said meeting every volunteer association of the said province is most earnestly requested to send delegates, then and there to deliberate on the present alarming situation of public affairs, and to determine on, and publish to their country what may be the result of said meeting.

“ *Resolved*, That as many real and lasting advantages may arise to this kingdom, from said intended meeting being held, before the present session of parliament is much farther advanced, Friday, the 15th day of February next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, is hereby appointed for said meeting, at Dungannon as aforesaid.

“ *Resolved*, That as at said meeting, it is highly probable the idea of forming brigades, will be agitated and considered, the several corps of volunteers who send delegates to said meeting, are requested to vest in them a power to associate with some one of such brigades as may be then formed.

“ FRANCIS EVANS, Chairman.”

ed, men of every description manifested their deep concern in the event. The administration was considered by them all to have treated the demands of the people with scorn : and they charged the parliament with having leagued with administration against them. They had arms in their hands, but no chain of correspondence, which could alone give efficacy to their resolves. Thus circumstanced, a meeting was formed, attended by Lord Charlemont, Mr. Flood, Mr. Grattan, Mr. Stewart (member for Tyrone), and Mr. Dobbs, a barrister, at which were passed the famous resolutions of Dungannon. They were 21 in number, and their general substance as follows,

1782.

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That whereas it had been asserted, that volunteers, as such, could not with propriety debate or publish their opinions on political subjects, or on the conduct of parliament, or public men; they resolved that a citizen, by learning the use of arms, did not abandon any of his civil rights. That a claim of any body of men, other than the king, lords, and commons of Ireland, to make laws to bind that kingdom, was unconstitutional, illegal, and a grievance. That the powers exercised by the privy council of both kingdoms, under colour or pretence of the law of Poynings, were unconstitutional and a grievance. That the ports of Ireland were by right open to all foreign countries not at war with the king. That a mutiny bill not limited in point of duration from session to session was unconstitutional. That the independence of the judges was as essential to the impartial administration of justice in Ireland, as in

Substance  
of the Dun-  
gannon re-  
solutions.



1782.

England. That the minority in parliament, who had supported their constitutional rights, were entitled to thanks. That four members from each county of the province of Ulster be appointed a committee, till the next general meeting, to act for the volunteer corps there represented, and to communicate with other volunteer associations. That they would not consume any wine of the growth of Portugal, until their exports should be received in the kingdom of Portugal, as the manufactures of part of the British empire. That they held the right of private judgment in matters of religion, to be equally sacred in others, as in themselves. And therefore, as men, and as Irishmen, as Christians, and as Protestants, they rejoiced in the relaxation of the penal laws against their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects\*.

\* The short and spirited address of the volunteers to the minority in parliament, deserves to be handed down to the latest posterity.

“ To the Right Honorable and Honorable the Minority in both Houses of Parliament

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ WE thank you for your noble and spirited, though hitherto ineffectual efforts, in defence of the great constitutional and commercial rights of your country. Go on! the almost unanimous voice of the people is with you; and in a free country the voice of the people must prevail. We know our duty to our sovereign, and are loyal. We know our duty to ourselves, and are resolved to be free. We seek for our rights, and no more than

Thus ended the business of that memorable day. 1782.  
 The meeting was in the church. The country rejoiced at the temper and firmness of the proceedings: it's enemies were disappointed. To divide and conquer, had been too long the odious policy of the castle; that of Dungannon, was to unite and be victorious. These resolutions were erected as the standard, to which all the volunteers repaired. Committees of correspondence were formed, and the national committee crowned the business.

Peaceable conclusion of the Dungannon meeting.

Within five days after the passing of the Dungannon resolutions, when the Roman Catholic Bill was in the committee\*, Mr. Gardiner observed, that he was happy to find that liberal spirit of toleration, which had originated in that house, so widely diffused throughout the kingdom. The delegates at Dungannon had proved, that the people of the north were as forward to grant toleration, as the catholics could be to receive it. He hoped to obtain the unanimous approbation of the house; and had therefore divided the indulgencies, which he thought ought to be granted to Roman Catholics, into five heads. The first, and that, which he then intended to propose to the committee, respected their enjoyment of property: the second, the free exercise of religion: the third,

Mr. Gardiner's bill in favor of the catholics.

our rights; and, in so just a pursuit, we should doubt the being of a Providence, if we doubted of success.

"Signed by order,

"WILLIAM IRVINE, Chairman."

\* Viz. on the 20th of February, 1782. 1 Parl. Debates, p. 148.

1782. education : the fourth, marriage : and the fifth, which, from the disposition of the committee, he did not then think expedient to agitate, regarded self-defence. The attorney-general, and some other leading men in the commons, opposed the bill. Even Mr. Flood objected to catholics acquiring any power in the state, which he contended they would by the ability of possessing freehold land, which carried with it an influence in elections for members of parliament. The liberal and enlightened mind of Mr. Grattan was for the removal of every disability, that deprived the catholic of his full participation of the constitution. He spoke highly of the constitutional principles of the catholic body. Nor should it be mentioned as a reproach to them, that they fought under the banner of King James, when it was recollected, that before they entered the field, they extorted from him a Magna Charta, a British constitution. He should be ashamed of giving freedom to but six hundred thousand of his countrymen, when he could extend it to millions. Fortunately for the catholics, Mr. Gardiner's bill was not made a government question, or it would probably have fallen before the same majority, which had uniformly opposed every constitutional question, brought before them since the commencement of the American war. The nearer the fatal ministry of Lord North drew to its dissolution, the more violent were its agonizing struggles against the patriotic efforts of Ireland to obtain a free and independent constitution.

Mr Grattan  
moves an  
address to

Within the octave of the great civic festival at Dunganon, Mr. Grattan, as the herald and oracle of his



armed countrymen, moved in the house of commons\*, for an address to the King, "To assure his majesty with unfeigned attachment to his person and government, that the people of Ireland were a free people; the crown of Ireland a distinct kingdom, with a parliament of her own; and that with one voice they protested against the interposition of any other parliament in its legislation. That the claim of the British parliament, to legislate for Ireland, was useless to England, cruel to Ireland, and without any foundation in law. That impressed with a high sense of the justice of the British character, and in reliance on

178.

the King  
on the le-  
gislative in-  
dependence  
Ireland.

\* On the 22d of February, 1782. 1 Parl. Deb. p. 266. He ushered in his motion with a brilliant speech, in which he referred by historical allusion to America, and the weakness of the administration, which occasioned its loss to Great Britain. A peculiar excellency of that great man's oratory is, that it applies as forcibly to existing circumstances, as to those which immediately occasioned the exertion of his stupendous powers. "How futile and absurd are all the arguments, that teem on this occasion from the government press? I am for tranquillity; it is for honorable tranquillity; but when I see an administration, unable to make a blow against an enemy, tyrannize over Ireland, I am bound to exert every power to oppose it.

"Ireland is in strength; she has acquired that strength by the weakness of Britain: for Ireland was saved, when America was lost: when England conquered, Ireland was coerced; when she was defeated, Ireland was relieved; and when Charles-town was taken, the mutiny and sugar bills were altered. Have you not all of you, when you heard of a defeat, at the same instant, condoled with England, and congratulated Ireland?

"If England were for a moment awake to her own interests, she would come forward, and invite us to her arms, by doing away every cause of jealousy."

1782. his majesty's paternal care, they had set forth their right and sentiments, without prescribing any mode to his majesty, and threw themselves on his royal wisdom." Mr. Brownlow seconded the motion, remarking that the people knew their rights; and it was needless for government to pretend to oppose what must at last be obtained. The attorney-general opposed the address by moving to have it put off to the first of August; which motion was carried by 137 against 68.

Mr. Flood's two resolutions negatived.

As government affected, that the late division against the address did not involve the question of right in Great Britain to bind Ireland by legislative acts, the patriots returned to the charge; but by a similar majority the ministry negatived \* Mr. Flood's two self-evident resolutions: That the members of that house were the only representatives of the people of Ireland. And that the consent of the commons was indispensably necessary to render any statute binding.

Mr. Gardiner's catholic bills.

The heads of the Roman Catholic bills in their progress through the committee occasioned several warm debates. The first of them, intituled, *An Act for the further Relief of his Majesty's Subjects of this Kingdom professing the Roman Catholic Religion* †, taking notice that the continuance of several of the Popery laws was unnecessary, and injurious to Ireland, enabled catholics to take, hold, and dispose of lands and hereditaments in the same manner as

\* 1 Parl. Debates, p. 279. The division was 137 against 76.

† 21 and 22 Geo. III. c. 24.

1782.

Protestants: (except advowsons and manors, and boroughs returning members for parliament.) It removed several penalties from such of the clergy, as should have taken the oath of allegiance and been registered; and repealed several of the most noxious parts of the acts of Ann and Geo. I. and Geo. II. \*. The second bill bespoke it's purport upon the face of it's title†; *An Act to allow Persons professing the Popish Religion to teach School in this Kingdom, and for the regulating the Education of Papists, and also to repeal Parts of certain Laws relative to the Guardianship of their Children.* When Mr. Gardiner proposed his third bill, which was for establishing intermarriages between Protestants and Roman Catholics, the house divided upon it, and the bill was negatived by a majority of eight ‡.

\* Such as the power given to a magistrate to fine and imprison every papist refusing to appear and declare upon oath when and where he had last heard mass, who celebrated and assisted at it, and the residence of any popish ecclesiastic: such as prohibited a papist to have a horse of the value of 5*l.* under certain penalties, and which enabled the chief governor to seize all their horses upon any invasion or intestine war likely to happen: such as enabled the grand jury to present the reimbursing of all robberies and depredations of privateers in time of war upon the real and personal estate of the catholics within the county: such as subjected every catholic to certain penalties, who did not provide a protestant watchman to watch in his turn: and such as subjected to certain penalties every catholic, who should take or purchase a house in Limerick or Galway, or the suburbs thereof.

† 21 and 22 Geo. III. c. 62.

‡ 10 Journ. Com. p. 317.



1782.

Nature of  
the oppo-  
sition to the  
catholic  
bills.

The great opposition proceeded from the Archbishop of Cashell's interest. Several, who held places under government, were also adverse. Government gave neither countenance nor support, though some supporters of government favoured the measure. These bills were viewed in very opposite lights by different descriptions of persons. Some considered them as ruinous to the protestant ascendancy in Ireland, and therefore opposed them in every stage: others considered them too liberal, although some encouragement ought to be given to the long tried and then much wanted fidelity of the catholics. A third class inclined to grant even more, than these bills imported; though they still maintained, that the Irish catholics were to be kept in a civil subordination to the privileged order of protestants. And a fourth unequivocally declared, that national justice and policy demanded the complete emancipation of the catholics, and a perfect civil amalgamation of the whole Irish people\*.

Decline of  
Lord Car-  
lisle's ad-  
ministra-  
tion and  
his resigna-  
tion.

Although these and some other bills did not receive the royal assent during the vice-royalty of Lord

\* Mr. Burke in a letter to a peer of Ireland upon this bill (printed in London, 1785) says, "To look at the bill, in the abstract, it is neither more nor less than a renewed act of universal, unmitigated, indispensable, exceptionless disqualification. One would imagine, that a bill inflicting such a multitude of incapacities, had followed on the heels of a conquest, made by a very fierce enemy, under the impression of recent animosity and resentment. No man, on reading that bill, could imagine he was reading an act of amnesty and indulgence. It has surely much more the air of a table of proscriptions, than an act of grace."

Carlisle, yet having been brought forward under him, they may be considered as acts of his administration. Such also was the bill\* for establishing a national bank of Ireland, with some other beneficial bills of regulation. As the Irish administration was but a subordinate part of that of Great Britain, it was natural, that the lord-lieutenant and his secretary should carry matters with a less high hand, when once they perceived the opposition of Great Britain gaining ground, and hastening the downfall of that ill-fated† ministry, which had weakened the British empire by the loss of her American colonies, the useless sacrifice of one hundred thousand lives, and the accumulation of above a hundred millions of national debt.

1782.

One of the last acts of Mr. Eden's, in the commons, was the communication of his Majesty's answer to their address relative to the affairs of Portugal. Lord Carlisle foreseeing in the change of ministry a total change of principles and measures with reference to Ireland, and having received no fresh instructions or support from the British cabinet, wished only to carry some of the then pending bills up to the lords; and on the 14th of March, 1782, adjourned the parliament to the 16th of April. By that time a general change

Last act of  
Mr. Eden.

\* 21 and 22 Geo. III. c. xvi.

† The first unequivocal symptom of the downfall of Lord North's administration, was the resignation of Lord George Germaine. The unpopularity, treatment, and conduct of the American secretary, and several important circumstances relative to the change of that administration, may be seen in my *Historical Review*, vol. I. p. 594, &c.

1782. having taken place in the British ministry, Mr. Eden went to London with Lord Carlisle's resignation of the lieutenancy, desiring only time to make some necessary arrangements, and to close the session of parliament.

Appoint-  
ment of the  
Duke of  
Portland,  
and Mr.  
Eden's con-  
duct in the  
British  
commons.

On the 14th of April, the Duke of Portland arrived in Dublin, and immediately took upon himself the government of Ireland. Mr. Eden, speedily after his arrival in England, laid before the British parliament\*, a view of Ireland during the two last years; acquainted the house with the measures, which (he said) were then forming, for rendering it totally independent of the British legislature; and concluded with moving for leave to bring in a bill to repeal so much of the act of the 6th of George I. as asserted a right in the King and parliament of Great Britain to make laws to bind that kingdom. The precipitation, with which a business of such magnitude and importance was thus attempted to be forced on the house, without previous communication with any of his Majesty's ministers, or knowledge of their intentions, was severely censured, and the more especially as it appeared, that the right honourable gentleman had refused to give any

\* The debate upon the situation of Ireland on the 8th of April, 1782, in the British house of commons, was so illustrative of the ancient system of governing Ireland; so explanatory of the views and motives of the British cabinet, in the different measures they imposed upon that kingdom, that the reader may be gratified in learning, from the mouths of the actors themselves, a complete narrative of this great revolution in the kingdom of Ireland. In the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LXVIII. the whole debate is given.



official information to government relative to the state of the country he had just left. Mr. Eden, though loudly called on to withdraw his motion, persisted in urging its necessity; and in vindication of his own conduct, stated, that the reason of his refusing to have any communication with his Majesty's present servants, was the great want of attention to the Earl of Carlisle, which they had shewn in the mode of appointing his successor, and in his removal from the lord-lieutenancy of the East Riding of Yorkshire. This apology served rather to increase the displeasure of the house; a motion of censure on his conduct was threatened; and it was with great difficulty he was at last brought to comply with the general wish of the house by withdrawing his motion. Mr. Fox informed the house in the course of this debate, that the ministers of the crown, during the short time they had been in office, had holden three or four councils, solely on the affairs of Ireland; and that he hoped very soon, perhaps within the next four-and-twenty hours, to lay some preparatory measure before them.

On the very next day, viz. April 9th, 1782\*, Mr. Secretary Fox communicated the following message to the house:

His Majesty sends a message to both houses of the British parliament concerning Ireland.

“ GEORGE R.

“ His Majesty being concerned to find, that discontents and jealousies are prevailing among

\* 7 Parl. Debates, p. 24. And on the same day, the first of their meeting, a message to the like effect was delivered to the lords, and addresses were unanimously voted by both houses.

1782. his loyal subjects in Ireland, upon matters of great weight and importance, earnestly recommends to this house, to take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to such a final adjustment as may give mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms. G. R."

M. Fox  
proposes  
thanks to  
to his ma-  
jesty.

Mr. Secretary Fox expressed in strong terms the sincere wishes of his Majesty's ministers to secure the peace and welfare of Ireland. The hasty step proposed by Mr. Eden would have been unwise and impolitic. It was the duty of government to conclude an arrangement for posterity, as well as for the present day: and in quieting the existing jealousies, to establish such a principle of relation and constitution, as should prevent future discontents from arising. He believed it would be easy for the King's ministers to do as their predecessors had done: to patch up a temporary cessation of claims, and leave to those, who were to come after them, all the dangers of an unsettled constitution, for the mean advantage of clearing themselves from difficulties, which they had not the courage to meet with fairness. He then moved an address to return his Majesty thanks for his most gracious message; and to assure his Majesty, that the house, feeling with his Majesty the deepest concern, that discontents and jealousies should have arisen among his Majesty's loyal subjects in Ireland, would, without delay, take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to such a final adjustment, as might give mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms.

Duke of  
Portland  
meets the  
parliament.

The Duke of Portland, on his arrival in Dublin, was received with excessive demonstrations of joy.

When the parliament met according to adjournment, on the 16th of April, the galleries and bar of the house of commons were crowded, and expectation was raised to enthusiasm. As soon as the speaker had taken the chair, Mr. John Hely Hutchinson, his Majesty's principal secretary of state, rose, and announced to the house, that he was charged by the lord-lieutenant to communicate to them a message from his Majesty, of the same tenor as that, which had been communicated to both houses of the British parliament. He addressed them, not as an officer of the crown, but as a gentleman of the country. He spoke determinately in favour of the legislative independence of Ireland. In mentioning Mr. Grattan in terms most honourable, but not exceeding his deserts, he said, he would ever live in the hearts of his countrymen. The present age and posterity would be indebted to him for the greatest of all obligations, and would (but he hoped at a great distance of time) inscribe on his tomb, that he had redeemed the liberties of his country.

Mr. George Ponsonby moved an address to his Majesty, thanking him for his most gracious message, and assuring him, that his faithful commons would immediately proceed upon the great objects he had recommended to their consideration. Mr. Grattan, after a speech of unusual brilliancy, moved an amendment to the address\*, which imported a repeal of the 6th of

1782.



Motion of  
thanks to  
the King.

\* He said he had nothing to add, but to admire by what steady virtue, the people had asserted their own rights. He was not very old, and yet he remembered Ireland a child. He had watched her growth; from infancy she grew to arms: from arms to li-



1782.

George I. including a restoration of the appellant jurisdiction to the lords of Ireland, an abolition of the unconstitutional power of privy-councils, and a repeal of the mutiny bill. The judges' bill he refrained from mentioning, as he had heard it was returned. His motion was unanimously agreed to.

Reflections  
on the ver-  
satility of  
the Irish  
house of  
commons.

The short space of six weeks had scarcely elapsed, since the house of commons had triumphantly boasted

erty. She was not now afraid of the French ; she was not now afraid of the English ; she was not now afraid of herself. Her sons were no longer an arbitrary gentry ; a ruined commonalty ; protestants oppressing catholics ; catholics groaning under oppression : she was now an united land.

This house agreeing with the voice of the nation, passed the popery bill, and by so doing got more than it gave, yet found advantages from generosity, and grew rich in the act of charity. Ye gave not : but ye formed an alliance between the protestant and the catholic powers, for the security of Ireland. What signifies it, that three hundred men in the house of commons—what signifies it, that one hundred men in the house of peers—assert their country's liberty, if unsupported by the people ? But there is not a man in Ireland ; there is not a grand jury ; there is not an association ; there is not a corps of volunteers ; there is not a meeting of their delegates, which does not maintain the independence of the Irish constitution, and pledge themselves to support the parliament in fixing that constitution on its rightful basis. Not long ago the meeting at Dungannon was considered as a very alarming measure : but I thought otherwise ; I approved of it, and considered the meeting of Dungannon as an original transaction. As such only it was matter of surprise. What more extraordinary transaction, than the attainment of Magna Charta ? That was not attained in parliament, but by the barons, armed, and in the field. A great original transaction is not founded in precedent, it contains in itself both reason and precedent ; the revolution had no precedent.

of their steady adherence to the dictates of the British cabinet, in rejecting every effort of the patriots to attain that constitutional liberty, which they had been labouring for years to secure. The versatility of that majority in supporting the propositions, which they had before rejected, is a political phenomenon of curious observation. The ministerial members of independent fortune rose in succession to purify their past conduct from any interested or corrupt motive. Even Mr. Fitzgibbon defied the house to charge him with ever having asserted *the supremacy of the British parliament*; though he confessed he had voted with ministers against *the declaration of rights*, as judging it then improper to be moved. This gentleman spoke a new language in the face of his country\*, that *as the nation was then committed to obtain a restoration of their rights, it behoved every man to stand firm.*

1782.

A congratulatory address to the Duke of Portland was proposed by Mr. O'Neil, and unanimously voted. Mr. Fitzgibbon then observed, that as the suddenness of Lord Carlisle's departure had rendered it impossible to convey to him the opinion entertained of his administration in the way of address, he should move a resolution of that tendency; which was seconded by Mr. Daly. Mr. Grattan, who had opposed most of his measures, felt himself called upon to resist it; but the resolution was carried without a division.

Addresses voted to the Duke of Portland and Lord Carlisle.

On the 4th of May, 1782, the house adjourned for three weeks, in order to give time for the determination

Adjournment of the Irish parliament, and proceedings of the British.

\* 1 Parl. Deb. p. 342.

1782. of the British ministry in respect to their claim for a declaration of rights. On this occasion a conversation ensued, in which Mr. Fitzgibbon and Mr. Scott\*, spoke on the independent rights of Ireland, which they had hitherto invariably opposed, with as much enthusiasm, as the most high-flying patriot under the late administration. The situation of Ireland was fairly brought under the consideration of his Majesty's servants† by accord, on the same day (May 17, 1782) in both houses of the British parliament, by the Earl of Shelburne in the peers, and by Mr. Fox in the commons. After a most liberal,

\* i. e. Lord Clare and Lord Clonmell.

† We are informed by Lord Clare (Sp. 33.) that on the 6th of May the Duke of Portland wrote to Lord Shelburne, "recommending to the British cabinet concession of all the points demanded by the Irish addresses," but "stating his perfect confidence in the readiness of the Irish parliament to co-operate in the most effectual measures either with the King's confidential servants, or by commissioners to be appointed, or through the medium of the chief governor, to settle the precise limits of the independence, which was required, the consideration, which should be given for the protection expected, and the proportion, which it would be proper for them to contribute towards the general support of the empire, in pursuance of the declaration contained in the concluding paragraph of their own address. The regulation of trade would make a very necessary article of the treaty." This communication was made by the Duke of Portland before the claims of Ireland had been therefore brought into discussion in the British parliament; and demonstrates that the British Cabinet was aware of the readiness on the part of Ireland to settle every question of imperial policy or regulation, which might thereafter arise, or be brought before the British parliament.



instructive, and constitutional speech from each of these accomplished orators and statesmen, were proposed the following motions. 1782.

First, "That it was the opinion of that house, that the act of the 6th of George I. intituled, *An Act for the better securing the Dependency of Ireland upon the Crown of Great Britain*, ought to be repealed."

Second, "That it was the opinion of that house, that it was indispensable to the interests and happiness of both kingdoms, that the connection between them should be established by mutual consent, upon a solid and permanent footing, and that an humble address should be presented to his Majesty, that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to take such measures as his Majesty in his royal wisdom should think most conducive to that important end."

The Earl of Carlisle, in an elegant speech, though recalled from his government in no flattering manner, most liberally expressed his approbation of the motions. He bore ample testimony to the zeal and loyalty of the Irish, and particularly stated the honourable conduct of the volunteers, and the liberal offers made of their service, when Ireland was threatened with invasion. Lord Loughborough, alone in the peers, no one in the commons, opposed the motions. Lord Carlisle supports the motions.

On the 27th of May, 1782, the parliament of Ireland met according to adjournment, when his grace the Duke of Portland, in a gracious speech from the throne\*, expressed his satisfaction at assuring the Duke of Portland meets the parliament.

\* Parl. Debates, p. 355.

1782.

Irish parliament, that the British legislature had concurred in a resolution to remove the causes of their discontents and jealousies, and had united in a desire to gratify every wish expressed in their late addresses to the throne. After the speech had been read, Mr. Grattan\*, with his usual eloquence, bore testimony to the candid and unqualified manner, in which Great Britain had given up *in toto* every claim to authority over Ireland, and that unconditionally; which must for ever remove suspicion, and put an end to all future questions. They had recovered a constitution, and their business was to maintain it. He recommended, that they should make an unconditional grant to England of 100,000*l.* for raising 20,000 Irish seamen for the British navy; which were afterwards voted. He then moved an address devoid of all fulsome panegyric, and containing nothing but the truth. Mr. Brownlow seconded the motion. Almost the whole house rose successively to make public profession of their joy and gratitude on the happy event. Two gentlemen only differed upon the propriety of the following words in the address, viz. *That there will no longer exist any constitutional question between the two nations, that can interrupt their harmony.* The house divided upon the words objected to; when there were for the address as it stood 211, and only two against it, viz. Mr. Walsh and Sir Samuel Bradstreet†, the Recorder of Dublin.

\* 1 Parl. Debates, p. 855.

† Although these gentlemen, whose genuine patriotism was never questioned, were the only two of the whole house of commons in Ireland, who were of opinion, that any constitutional

No sooner had this motion been disposed of, than M. Bagnal, after having congratulated his country, Great Britain, his Majesty, and his ministers, for having obtained the greatest of all political blessings, called upon the house to confer some signal mark of a great and grateful nation upon their illustrious benefactor Mr. Grattan, whose efforts in procuring them these blessings had been timed and conducted with so much wisdom; and considering this great and good man as the father of his regenerated country, he further called upon them to look upon him as the special instrument, which benign Providence had used to convert the oppression and bondage of their country into freedom and independence. He therefore gave notice, that on the morrow, after the grant to his Majesty should have been settled, and a proper thanksgiving offered to Heaven for the recovery of their rights, he would move, that the house should resolve itself into a committee to take into consideration what sum they should grant for the purchasing an estate, and building a suitable mansion for their illustrious benefactor Henry Grattan, Esq. and his heirs for ever, in testimony of

1782.

Patriotic  
donation to  
Henry Grat-  
tan.

question between the two nations was still outstanding; yet Mr. Flood and some few others afterwards adopted that opinion, and Lord Clare, with a view to the Union, quoted a correspondence between Lord Shelburne and the Duke of Portland, to prove that the transactions of 1782 between Great Britain and Ireland were not considered as final, though evidently so treated by Mr. Grattan and the rest of both houses of parliament. Considerable extracts from these letters are to be seen in my *Historical Review*, vol. I. p. 611.



1782.



their gratitude for the unequalled service he had done for the kingdom of Ireland. This was afterwards fixed at the sum of 50,000*l*.\* in the committee, which resolution the house unanimously agreed to, and resolved, that an address should be presented to the lord-lieutenant, to lay before his Majesty, the humble desire of that house, that he would direct such sum so to be laid out in testimony of the gratitude of the nation for Mr. Grattan's eminent and unequalled services, and that the house would make good the same.

Mr. Flood's  
jealousy of  
Mr. Grat-  
tan.

A day of general thanksgiving was proclaimed, and for the moment happiness pervaded every part of the kingdom. It was, however, but short-lived. Within three days after Mr. Bagnal's motion, Mr. † Montgomery called the attention of the house to Mr. Flood, who had relinquished the most lucrative office of the state, rather than desert the constitution of Ireland: and as he knew the present administration intended to raise its glory by acting on the most liberal principles of freedom, he gave notice, of his intention to move an address to his Majesty, for restoring Mr. Flood to the office he lately held, and in this he hoped for the concurrence of the minister. He would not, he said, move for any pecuniary reward, as he knew the Right Hon. gentleman in question was above receiving alms from his country. Colonel Fitzpatrick observed, that

\* Viz. on the 27th of May, 1782. 9 Journ. Com. p. 357. Mr. Bagnal's speech on this occasion is to be seen in my Historical Review, vol. I. p. 612, &c.

† 1 Parl. Deb. p. 381. on the 30th of May, 1782.

the place of Mr. Flood was filled by Sir George Yonge; whose ill offices to Ireland were severely pointed at by Mr. Walsh. Colonel Fitzpatrick maintained the impropriety of breaking in upon the discretionary exercise of the prerogative; and suggested, that the regular method would be to move first for an address to remove Sir George Yonge from his employment\*. Mr. Flood was dissatisfied with Mr. Yelverton's bill for the modification of Poynings' law, to which he moved an amendment, which he supported with great powers, though it were not carried.

1782.

The grand opposition, which Mr. Flood and his few adherents in the commons made to the proceedings then going forward to accomplish the demands of the Irish parliament, was grounded upon a suggestion of the duplicity of Great Britain, which still retained the full principle of her right to legislate for every part of the empire. A simple repeal, he insisted, without an express renunciation of the right, would leave Ireland precisely where she was. That without some positive renunciation of the right to legislate internally and

Mr. Flood's  
objections  
to simple  
repeal.

\* To this Mr. Montgomery observed, that if the crown had been misinformed, and led to bestow an honourable employment upon an unworthy object, it would be right to undeceive it, and address the King to bestow it on one, that was deserving of it. On the 1st of June he declared, that Mr. Flood knew nothing of his application, or he would not have permitted it to have been made: but although he should defer his motion, he still insisted, that it was most disgraceful in the late administration to displace, and in the present to permit a gentleman to suffer the loss of 3500*l.* per ann. for his attachment to the constitution and interests of his country.

1782.

externally on the part of Great Britain, their work would be but half done, and Ireland might again be enslaved by the first corrupt minister, who should choose to avail himself of the unsuspecting and too liberal conduct of Ireland. Mr. Flood's doctrines gained more proselytes out of doors than in parliament. Mr. Grattan, and by far the greater part of the house confided implicitly in the good faith of Great Britain, and contended, that the simple repeal went the whole length of their own demands. Both Mr. Yelverton and Mr. Grattan declared, that if they could be convinced, that the simple repeal was insufficient, they would most cordially join Mr. Flood in his motion. Never was contest more fiercely fought, than this between the two rival patriots, Messrs. Flood and Grattan. It ended on the division of the house upon Mr. Flood's motion on the 19th of July, 1782\*, for leave to bring in the heads of a bill for declaring the sole and exclusive right of the Irish parliament to make laws in all cases whatsoever internal and external for the kingdom of Ireland.

Change in  
the British  
administra-  
tion by the  
death of  
Lord Rock-  
ingham.

The death of the Marquis of Rockingham had occasioned dissensions in the British cabinet, which obliged Mr. Fox, Lord John Cavendish, Mr. Burke, and others of his friends to resign. Mr. Fox would not submit to remain in a cabinet, in which he, and his friends, who had come in and acted uniformly upon an open principle, were outvoted; he had de-

\* 9 Journ. Com. p. 378. The Journals merely say, It passed in the negative. Mr. Dobbs says in his history, p. 121, "that the minority on that day consisted only of six."



clared before the death of the marquis, that if certain measures were carried in the cabinet, he should resign; and as they had been carried since his death, he did resign, disdaining to be responsible for measures he disapproved of, or to lend his name to a system, in which he had no share. In the new arrangement of Lord Shelburne's administration, which took place on the 13th of July, 1782, Lord Temple\* was fixed upon to succeed the Duke of Portland in the viceregency of Ireland. Every possible dispatch was therefore given to the parliamentary business in Ireland, in order that the Duke of Portland might close the session, and as far as conveniently could be, adjust all the arrangements then pending between the two kingdoms respecting her legislative independence and commercial freedom. Lord Shelburne, who was the head of the new administration, had been fully as explicit, open, and liberal in his speech to the lords, with reference to Ireland, as Mr. Fox, in his speech to the commons. It was therefore generally presumed, that the change in the British administration would cause no alteration in the system of concession to that kingdom.

1782.

The more beneficial acts, which passed under the Duke of Portland's administration, were Mr. Eden's act for establishing the national bank; an Act, "for better securing the liberty of the subject," commonly called the *Habeas Corpus* act, similar to the English act; the repeal of the act requiring the sacramental test, by which dissenting protestants were

Acts under the Duke of Portland's administration.

\* Now Marquis of Buckingham.

1782. excluded from offices of trust under the crown; the repeal of the perpetual mutiny bill; and the act for the independence of the judges. An act was also passed to render the manner of conforming from the Popish to the Protestant religion more easy and expeditious. Another for sparing to his Majesty, to be drawn out of this kingdom whenever he should think fit, a force not exceeding 5000 men (part of the troops appointed to be kept therein for its defence). On the 27th of July, 1782, the lord-lieutenant concluded the session.

Continuing  
influence  
of the vo-  
lunteers.

The volunteers had now too long been enured to arms, as well as to the agitation of political subjects, not to partake of the spirit of enthusiasm, with which the questions of simple repeal and renunciation were contended for in parliament: frequent appeals to them were made by persons in parliament; and the volunteers assumed a consequence little short of legislative control. Provincial meetings were called to take into consideration addresses suitable to the occasion. Some meetings explicitly avowed their intent to canvass the proceedings of their representatives in parliament. A spirit of dissent had created discontent; and the immediate object of their consideration was, whether there existed or not just cause of complaint. At their first meeting nothing was agreed upon: at their next a resolution was unanimously carried in favour of the simple repeal. At a future meeting, an address to his majesty was determined on to express the opinion of 306 companies of volunteers in favour of the simple repeal. It passed unanimously, and with loud applause. Captain Pol-

lock then moved an address to the Duke of Portland, which was carried unanimously ; as was also an address to Lord Charlemont, appointing him general of the volunteers of Ulster. An address to Mr. Grattan, expressing the highest satisfaction at the vote of 50,000*l.* ; a resolution moved by Colonel Knox, for assisting in raising the 20,000 seamen ; and another for erecting a monument at Dungannon, in which Lord Charlemont and Mr. Grattan were particularly to be distinguished, were also carried unanimously. 1782.

The gentlemen, who were appointed to present the address to his majesty, sailed for England. Lord Shelburne treated them with the greatest politeness ; and his Majesty was pleased most graciously to receive their address, and every mark of attention was paid through them to the volunteers of Ulster. But scarcely had their addresses been presented, when the packets from Ireland announced the dissatisfaction of two corps in the town of Belfast, which had been represented at Dungannon ; their delegates were vilified and traduced in the news-papers : even Mr. Grattan became the object of abuse. The Belfast review was approaching ; those who were dissatisfied determined there to make their stand. The 31st of July exhibited a volunteer encampment of near three thousand men, and the volunteer garrison of upwards of one thousand, all completely clothed, armed, and accoutred. Anonymous papers in thousands were dispersed through the camp and garrison. Every private was taught, that he was competent to legislate, and consequently to express his sentiments on the most specu-

Gracious  
reception  
of the dele-  
gates from  
the volun-  
teers.



1782. lative points. Declaration, renunciation, simple repeal, legal security, better security, and bill of rights, were all before them, and they were to instruct their delegates on these important points. The delegates assembled on the 3d of August, Colonel Stewart was unánimously called to the chair. Major Dobbs, as exercising officer, moved an address to the Reviewing General, Lord Charlemont, in which he inserted a clause of their being fully satisfied with the simple repeal. A debate commenced, whether it should not be expunged; at the end of eleven hours a division took place, when there appeared for expunging 31, against it 29. The address thus altered, passed unánimously. By the exertions of a wise and liberal administration were the liberties of Ireland restored; peace, unity, and content diffused through a revived nation, and the prosperity and glory of the British empire encreased by adding strength, vigor, and felicity to that important part of it.

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THE  
HISTORY OF IRELAND,

8c. 8c.

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BOOK IV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD OF TIME FROM THE  
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IRISH LEGISLATIVE  
INDEPENDENCE IN THE YEAR 1782 TO THE  
UNION.

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CHAPTER I.

*Administration of Earl Temple.*

To the Rockingham administration \* did Ireland owe her independence in 1782. In this, Lord Shelburne had taken a prominent part. Having, however, upon Lord Rockingham's death contrived to be placed at the head of the administration, he selected Earl Temple

1782.

Lord Temple selected by Lord Shelburne to govern Ireland.

\* The advantage of a Whig administration is, that their principles are known; and afford a pledge to the public, that they will act up to them. The most flattering eulogy of Whiggism, is the short duration of the several Whig administrations, which

1782.



as the fittest person to undertake the government of independent Ireland. He had intermarried with the only child of Earl Nugent, who had been brought up in the religion of her ancestors, and upon whom her father\* had on the marriage settled the bulk of his large domains in Ireland. Lord Nugent had on every occasion, both in public and private, proved himself a sincere and warm lover of his country. The gratitude of the Irish to his son-in-law, the character and accomplishments of the new viceroy, and the virtues of his amiable consort, all tended to ensure him a most cordial welcome. He succeeded the Duke of Portland, who remained to finish the business of the session, on the 15th of September, 1782, and was received with public expressions of joy and satisfaction.

Earl Temple begins to reform the departments of government.

During the short period of Lord Temple's continuance in the government of Ireland, his chief attention appears to have been directed to the establishment of a system of economy throughout the different departments; a reformation supereminently necessary. The

have been formed during the present reign. They have never been called in, but on desperate emergencies. Their refusal to bend their principles to general commands, or some unconditional pledge, has constantly furnished a pretence for their quick removal.

\* The late Earl Nugent had been educated in the Roman Catholic religion; he conformed to the established religion in his youth, and some few years before his death, he returned to that, which he had abandoned.



short-lived administration of Lord Shelburne, of 1782. which Lord Temple was a principal support, determined his viceregency on the 3d of June, 1783. He was in power long enough to have brought upon himself the resentful opposition of all the subaltern dependants upon the Castle, who dreaded a scrutiny into their abuses; and not long enough for the nation to have felt the happy effects of so laudable an investigation.

During the Rockingham administration a termination was put to the contest between Great Britain and the American colonies by a resolution of the British house of commons in February, 1782, to address his majesty against the further prosecution of offensive war on the continent of North America, and for the restoration of the blessings of peace; which was concluded by Lord Shelburne's administration. The solemn termination of this unfortunate war spread joy through the Irish nation, and reconciled it in part to the sudden change of that administration, under which they had obtained their independence. The questions of simple repeal and positive declaration or renunciation of rights was kept up by the armed bodies of volunteers with greater heat, than they had been agitated in parliament.

Peace with  
America.

On the 19th of December, 1782, in the British house of commons, Colonel Fitzpatrick called the attention of government to a circumstance, which had given alarm to the people of Ireland: the decision of an Irish cause in the court of King's Bench in England, notwithstanding the declaration of Irish inde-

Proceed-  
ings of the  
British par-  
liament.

1783.

pendence had put an end to all appeals. Mr. Secretary Townshend explained this to have arisen from the cause having been in the court for eighteen months, and the judges were bound to decide upon it. The question of renunciation or simple repeal was frequently spoken to in the house. On the 22d of January, 1783\*, Mr. Secretary Townshend brought the business of Ireland before the house of commons, under the greatest anxiety to give Ireland every satisfaction, that justice demanded, and was consistent with the dignity of Great Britain. He wished, that his motion might pass unanimously, that the people of Ireland might see, that England meant fairly, when she set out by removing the causes of their jealousies and discontents. He then moved for leave to bring in a bill *For removing and preventing all doubts, which have arisen, or may arise, concerning the exclusive rights of the parliament and courts of Ireland in matters of legislation and judicature, and for preventing any writ of error, or appeal, from any of his majesty's courts in that kingdom, from being received, heard, and adjudged, in any of his majesty's courts in the kingdom of Great Britain*†. Mr. W. Grenville‡ (Secretary to Lord Temple) seconded the motion; he rejoiced that government had brought on the business; he would not say how jealousies had been excited in Ireland, but jealousies did exist there;

\* 9 Parl. Debates, p. 138.

† 23 Geo. III. c. 28.

‡ The present Lord Grenville.

and the late transaction in the court of King's Bench in England, had in no small degree contributed to spread them wider. He meant not to impeach the measures or intention of those gentlemen, who had managed the business last session on the part of Ireland. Lord Beauchamp was the most strenuous in the house for the inefficacy of the simple repeal. Colonel Fitzpatrick and Mr. Fox would not object to the Secretary's motion, although they saw no necessity for the bill; it was therefore moved for and carried unanimously.


1783.

In the discussion of the preliminary articles of peace, which were announced by Mr. Secretary Townshend on the 23d of January, 1783, was formed the memorable coalition between Lord North and Mr. Fox. Several of the friends of both these gentlemen vehemently reprobated the terms of Lord Shelburne's peace. They had violently opposed each other on the question of the American war: but that being now set to rest, they found no longer any grounds of difference, and therefore united for the common good of their country. On the 22d of February, the coalesced parties brought all their forces to bear upon the ministry. After a heated debate, they carried by a majority of 17 the following question\*: "That the concessions made to the

The coalition administration.

\* 9 Parl. Debates, p. 369. The house sat till past three in the morning; the ayes were 207, the noes 190. In consequence of this censure passed on the peace by the House of Commons, the Earl of Shelburne quitted his office of first commissioner of the treasury; and the chancellor of the exchequer declared publicly



1783.  adversaries of Great Britain, by the provisional treaty and preliminary articles were greater, than they were entitled to, either from the actual situation of their respective possessions, or from their comparative strength." In consequence of this defeat, the Secretary of State moved, that the house should adjourn to a near day, in order to afford time for completing the new ministerial arrangements. This Lord Nugent opposed on account of the Irish bill then pending. He should lament, if his countrymen were not convinced, that the people of England had with one voice agreed to its passing without prejudice or bias from ministerial influence. In the house of peers, Lord Thurlow avowed, that he had advised the noble lord, who had moved the first reading of the bill, not to move the second, but to let it remain till his majesty's ministers should choose to take it up: observing, that the bill had been concerted with the advice of the lord-lieutenant of Ireland; a man of great abilities, wisdom, and integrity: and considering what a stake he had in both countries, too

in the house, that he only held his place till a successor should be appointed to fill it. A ministerial interregnum ensued, which lasted till the beginning of April; during which time the kingdom remained in a state of great disorder, without any responsible government at home, the finances neglected, the military establishments un-reduced, and the negotiations with foreign powers, which the critical conjuncture of affairs rendered peculiarly important, entirely at a stand. Various causes were assigned for the extraordinary delay in the appointment of a new administration. They may be seen in my *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 11.

1783.

much attention could not be paid to his suggestions. For these reasons, he anxiously hoped the noble lord would remain, where he had conducted himself in his high capacity, so much to his own honor, and to the interests of both kingdoms. After a very heated debate, and personal reflections from the Duke of Chandos and Lord Radnor upon the new ministers having seized on the reins of government by force, and outraged royalty by peremptory conditions, the bill was committed without a dissenting voice. Although this bill produced many debates, it never went to one division.

Whilst the British senate was employed in securing freedom to Ireland, and during the ministerial interregnum, Ireland was not wholly inactive. The corporation of the City of Dublin presented an affectionate address to the lord-lieutenant; which was as affectionately answered. In order to gratify the public feeling, by giving additional lustre to the national consequence, letters-patent were passed for creating a society, or brotherhood, to be called, *Knights of the Illustrious Order of St. Patrick*, of which his majesty, his heirs, and successors, were appointed to be sovereigns; and the lord-lieutenant for the time being to officiate as grand master. Fifteen of the prime nobility were appointed knights companions of the order: and on the 11th of March, (the festival of St. Patrick), they were installed with great order and magnificence.

Disputes and dissensions had for some time subsisted between the aristocratic and democratic parties

Corporation of Dublin address the lord-lieutenant. Knights of St. Patrick instituted.

Intended settlement of New Geneva.

1783.

in the republic of Geneva, which had finally terminated in favor of the former, through the interference of the kings of France and Sardinia, and the cantons of Zurich and Berne. In consequence of which, many of the democratic party resolved to quit a country, in the government of which their weight and authority had been extinguished. They turned their eyes upon Ireland, and sent commissioners to Dublin, to consult and treat with that government in relation to their reception into the kingdom. The commissioners received marked attention from the people, (then alive to every sympathy for civil liberty), and more especially from the volunteers in the province of Leinster, into several corps of which they were admitted. Government manifested an avidity to receive these democratic emigrants little consistent with policy or foresight. They fixed upon a place for their residence at Passage, near to the confluence of the rivers Barrow and Suir, in the county of Waterford, in which a very considerable tract of land was shortly to revert to government; and this it was resolved should be appropriated and granted in fee to these Genevese settlers, and the place named *New Geneva*. The fundamental terms insisted upon by the Genevese, were, that they should be represented in parliament, and be governed by their own laws. These conditions having been rejected, and some material disagreements having happened between the parties on leading points, all further procedure in the business was stopped. Some of the Genevese however transported themselves into Ireland. This measure of government



fortunately proved abortive. It never could have been advantageous to levy the sum of 50,000*l.* \* 1783.  
upon a distressed country, to purchase the probable introduction of turbulence and discontent, with a thousand self-exiled martyrs to democracy, from the Antibazilican school of Geneva. Although the coalition administration had taken place from the beginning of April, yet Lord Temple did not quit the government till the 3d of June, 1783, when he was succeeded by the Earl of Northington.

\* This was the sum voted.

## CHAPTER II.

*Administration of the Earl of Northington.*

1783.

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 Dissolution
 of parlia-
 ment, and
 it's conse-
 quences.

THE reports of an immediate dissolution of parliament, which in fact took place on the 15th of July, 1783, had thrown the whole nation into a new political fever. The volunteers assumed to themselves the whole merit, without allowing any to their representatives, of having acquired the constitution of Great Britain. They considered it a disgrace to quit their arms, whilst any benefit to their country could be obtained by them. They bent their thoughts to the improvement of the state of the representation of the people in parliament, as the only remaining object wanted to complete their civil liberty. They were encouraged in this pursuit by the addresses of the county of York and some other counties to the commons in England, as well as by the persevering efforts of the Duke of Richmond, Mr. Pitt, and other then popular members, to bring about a reform in the representation of the people of Great Britain. Committees of correspondence were instituted with the most forward and zealous advocates for reform in England, and the letters received from them were circulated with avidity throughout Ireland*.

* These letters were from the Duke of Richmond, Dr. Price, Mr. Wynd, Dr. John Jebb, Lord Effingham, Mr. Cartwright, and others.

On the 1st of July, 1783, at a meeting of the delegates from forty-five companies of the province of Ulster, assembled at Lisburne in pursuance of a public requisition, it was resolved unanimously, That a general meeting of the volunteer delegates of the province of Ulster, on the subject of a more equal representation of the people in parliament, should be held at Dungannon, on the 8th day of September. Many spirited resolutions and addresses were published.

1783.

General
meeting of
the dele-
gates re-
solved on.

The eve of a dissolution, the speculations upon the new elections, and the successful efforts of the patriots in the people's cause, had worked up the elated minds of the volunteers to an enthusiasm for parliamentary reform little short of that, which they had before evinced for free trade and legislative independence. The state and constitution of their house of commons was fully and fairly set before their eyes. It consisted of three hundred members; sixty-four of them were sent by the counties, the remainder by cities and boroughs. The sixty-four from counties were in some measure, in the option of the people, and about as many more from the cities and boroughs might, by extraordinary exertions of the people, be freely chosen. Upon that calculation, the people by possibility might send one hundred and twenty-eight members to parliament. The other close boroughs sent the remainder one hundred and seventy-two. These were the property of some few lords and commoners; and being the majority, the house of commons, as it stood, was consequently the representative of an aristocracy. The

State of the
representa-
tion in par-
liament.

1783.

* several resolutions made in contemplation of and at the convention of Dungannon were emphatically expressive of the necessity of reform, and were circulated with unabating industry.

New parliament meets.

When the new parliament met, Lord Northington congratulated them upon their being in full possession and enjoyment of those constitutional and commercial advantages, which had been so firmly established by their last parliament. It was judiciously contrived by government, that a motion should be made for the thanks of that house to the volunteers, for their spirited endeavours to provide for the protection of their country, and for their ready and frequent assistance of the civil magistrate in enforcing the due execution of the laws. This being unanimously carried, prevented any other motion, likely to have been dictated by the intemperance of some volunteer member, that might have attributed very different effects to the armed associations, as very different effects were unquestionably produced by them.

Thanks voted to Lord Temple.

On the second day of the session, Mr. Gardiner moved a vote of thanks to the late governor Lord Temple. He had received addresses of thanks from every county in that kingdom, for his conduct as chief governor, and nothing but the sanction of that house was necessary to render the thanks of the people universal. Mr. Cuffie† seconded the motion, as

• The several addresses, resolutions, and letters upon the subject of reform, are to be seen in my *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 33 to 43.

† Now Lord Tyrawley.

having been witness to the many anxious days and nights he had spent in preparing plans for the welfare of Ireland, which his short stay prevented from being carried into execution*.

† Sir Henry Cavendish moved for retrenching the government expences, which brought on a most violent debate, and a division, which ascertained the force of the opposition to the administration of Lord Northington. Mr. Flood warmly supported his friend's motion, but recommended an amendment to extend the retrenchments to *the military establishment*. Sir Edward Newnham charged the British ministry with having taken the royal closet by assault, under the pretence of economy, and lessening the undue influence of the crown; they had deceived the people: for in Ireland their substitutes proved the friends of prodigality, and enemies to economy; in power their actions were the reverse of what their professions had been when out. Government resisted the motion as premature, till the national accounts had been gone into. The debate became so personal and over-heated between the two rival patriots, Messrs. Flood and Grattan, that they were both ordered into custody, in order to prevent any mischievous consequences from their unhappy difference‡. Twenty-seven divided for the motion, and eighty-four against it.

1783.

Opposition
to Lord
Northington's
administration.

* Only three gentlemen stood forth in the invidious light of opposing this vote of thanks. They had all three been charged as public defaulters, or as debtors to the King.

† 11 Journ. Com. p. 33.

‡ Their speeches on this occasion brought to light many inter-

1783.

Perseverance of opposition.

So unwearied was the present opposition, at the head of which stood Mr. Flood, in pressing military and other retrenchments, that they omitted no opportunity during the session of bringing them forward, but always with the like failure of success. Their party consisted of about one-sixth of the house, and as usual, few or none were moved from their ranks by eloquence, argument, or reason. When Mr. Foster had reported the resolutions from the committee of supply, Sir Edward Newnham proposed the granting of the supplies for six months, when Mr. Grattan observed, that the question had been already debated and decided; yet let but parliamentary reform be tacked to the money bill, and he would agree to it. The spirit of the people was with the opposition. Government was sensible, that the volunteers had performed their function, and wished therefore to disband them with prudence and effect. When the protecting duties were brought before the house, they were not supported by government in the way, which the half-starved unemployed manufacturers expected: they had been taught to consider them essentially necessary for the support of trade: they flocked round the parliament-house in anxious expectation of the protecting duties being established in their favour. Government took offence at the concourse of people crowding the avenues to the house, and considered the assemblage brought thither by opposition to intimidate. The oppo-

esting traits of Irish government. They are given in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LXX.

1783.


sition insisted, that the people came thither as supplicants not as rioters. When they were dispersed, many of them declared they were set on by those, who wished to oppose the measures of government. The opposition called for acts instead of professions of economy. Government was pursuing the speediest measures for disbanding the volunteers. Opposition, looking to the attainment of further advantages, considered their influence as necessary to procure the future, as it had been effectual in acquiring the past.

The next popular question urged was a reform in the representation of the people. In consequence of the resolutions of the Dungannon meeting, delegates were appointed to form a national convention, which assembled at Dublin on the 10th of November, when the Earl of Charlemont was nominated their chairman. They entered into resolutions on the subject, and requested Mr. Flood to introduce a bill for that purpose. Government was seriously alarmed, and the council had actually determined on arresting the chairman and secretary of the meeting; but considering this measure hazardous, they contrived to divide the opinion of the assembly respecting the extension of certain privileges to Roman Catholics. The common interest being thus disunited, the efforts of the convention became less formidable, and all means were devised to decry them in parliament. When

*Mr. Flood moved for leave to bring in a bill for the

National
convention
at Dublin.

* 2 Parl. Deb. p. 353, &c.

1783.

more equal representation of the people in parliament; he was firmly opposed by the attorney-general; because it originated with an armed body, which, although they had the glory of having preserved the domestic peace of their country, and rendered it formidable to foreign enemies, were now forming themselves into a debating society, and with the bayonet, were forcing the question, whether that house, or the convention, were the representatives of the people; and whether parliament or the volunteers were to be obeyed. Mr. Flood supported the cause of reform with resistless eloquence. He maintained, that the bill was not the order of any other assembly. No appearance of hostility or control appeared in the application. The volunteers had not lined the streets, or drawn up before the house. They had given their opinion with all humbleness and deference to the representatives, and begged them to take it up. They had prostrated themselves at the feet of parliament. Scarcely a member, who had ever opened his mouth in the house, was silent on this important occasion. Several, who admitted the necessity of reform, voted against it under the circumstance of the sitting of a national convention of delegates, who had previously agitated the question, and were waiting the result of its discussion in parliament. Towards the close of the debate, Mr. Grattan spoke for a short time, declaring himself decidedly the friend of a parliamentary reform. He recommended union between parliament and the illustrious body of volunteers, which it should be the study of his life to preserve. Upon a division,


49 were for receiving the bill, and 158 against it. Then Mr. Attorney-general moved, That it was become necessary to declare, that the house would maintain its just rights and privileges against all encroachments whatsoever, which resolution was carried by 150 against 68. Mr. Conolly closed the business, by a motion, which was carried unanimously, for addressing his Majesty, on their perfect satisfaction in his government and their present happy constitution; which it was their determined resolution to support with their lives and fortunes. Mr. Flood *, immediately after this debate, went over to England, apparently dissatisfied with the failure of his party.

1783:


Mr. D. Browne moved an address to his Majesty, upon the deranged state of the finances and the necessary retrenchments in every department of govern-

Further
proceedings
in the com-
mons.

* As Mr. Flood was one of the most brilliant characters of the latter days of Ireland, from which he appears to have retired in disgust, it may be agreeable to the reader to have his portrait from the masterly pen of his rival, Mr. Grattan. (Answer to Lord Clare's Speech, p. 33). "Mr. Flood, my rival, as the pamphlet calls him—and I should be unworthy the character of his rival, if in his grave I did not do him justice—he had his faults; but he had great powers; great public effect; he persuaded the old, he inspired the young; the castle vanished before him; on a small subject he was miserable; put into his hand a distaff, and, like Hercules, he made sad work of it; but give him the thunderbolt, and he had the arm of a Jupiter; he misjudged, when he transferred himself to the English parliament; he forgot that he was a tree of the forest, too old and too great to be transplanted at fifty; and his seat in the British parliament, is a caution to the friends of union to stay at home, and make the country of their birth the seat of their action."

1783.  ment. It was violently opposed by the attorney-general upon the ground, that a committee had been appointed to take into consideration the only plan practicable, viz. a reduction of the civil establishment; and the house had already passed a resolution for all practicable retrenchments. After a long and very heated debate, in which Mr. Corry bore the most prominent share, the order of the day was carried without a division. In consequence of the commons having tacked some clauses to the money bills sent up to the lords, the house of peers, on the 4th of December, 1783, came to two strong resolutions, which on the next day they ordered to be added to the standing orders of their house. The first* was, that all grants for the encouragement of particular manufactures, arts, and inventions, or for the construction or carrying on of any public or other works, ought to be made in separate acts, and that the practice of annexing such grants to bills of aid or supply, for the support of his Majesty's government, was unparliamentary, and tended to the destruction of the constitution. The second was, that their house would reject any money bill, to which such clauses should be annexed. Mr. Curran took up this matter as an insult and injury offered to the dignity and rights of the house of commons; and gave notice, that on the 16th of December he should bring it before them; and on that day, in a very thin house, he entered fully upon the subject, observing, that the resolution he intended

to propose, was only to vindicate the privilege of that house originating money bills in their own manner from the encroachments of a neighbouring assembly, which had lately, by certain resolutions, invaded that right. The motion was supported by 11 against 58. Nearly as soon as the projected changes in the British cabinet* could be known in Ireland, the parliament was adjourned to the 20th of January. The money bills were in the mean time passed.

1784.

Immediately upon the change of ministry in England, Lord Northington sent in his resignation; it was accepted on the 7th of January, though his successor, the Duke of Rutland, were only appointed on the 24th of February, 1784. The house of commons met, according to adjournment, on the 20th of January, when the attorney-general moved a further adjournment, which was opposed by Sir Lucius O'Bryen, who saw no reason, why they should adjourn on account of a squabble for places, when the extreme distress of their country called their attention. The adjournment, however, was carried by a large majority. After the attorney-general had officially announced the appointment of the Duke of Rutland, Mr. William Brabazon Ponsonby moved a vote of thanks to

Lord Northington resigns.

* The stupendous effects of putting the British empire for nearly twenty years under the influence of Mr. Pitt, are viewed in the opposite extremes, according to the prevalence of political bias. The singular interference of a great personage during the debate in the lords upon Mr. Fox's East India Bill, and several interesting circumstances attending the consequent change of administration, together with the new appointments, are to be seen in my Historical Review, vol. II. p. 71, &c.

1784.

Lord Northington, which produced rather an angry debate. The opposition objected to it, conceiving the address to import oblique censure on the volunteers, and an absolute rejection of parliamentary reform. The late ministerial party urged in its favor the lord-lieutenant's patriotic refusal of an additional allowance of 4000*l.* per ann. and the unprecedented merit of not having added to the public debt. The period of eight months' viceregency, they contended, had not afforded an opportunity of reaping the fruits of the plans he had so wisely laid for the benefit of the country. The vote of thanks passed without amendment by a majority of 44.

CHAPTER III.

Administration of the Duke of Rutland.

1784

Expectations from the new administration.

WITH this governor commenced the system of Mr. Pitt's administration, which ended in incorporated union of Ireland with Great Britain. This period of Irish history is peculiarly interesting, inasmuch as it discloses the means, by which England exercised its influence over that kingdom with more effect and less disguise, than before she had acquired a constitution and legislative independence. The opponents of the Rockingham administration were extravagantly elated upon the new appointments, for in the names of Pitt, Richmond, and Rutland, they read three of the staunchest friends of parliamentary reform: laying their immediate failure to carry this favourite measure, as well as those of a reduction in the army establishment, retrenchment of the expenditures in the civil departments, and protecting duties*, to the insincerity of the short-lived administration of the Whigs, they anticipated the instantaneous and zealous co-operation of their opponents and successors, in completing the civil liberty of Ireland.

* i. e. For protecting their own manufactures and enforcing the consumption of them at home, by laying heavy and prohibitory duties on the like manufactures imported from foreign countries.

1784.

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 Duke of  
 Rutland  
 addressed.

When the house met, according to adjournment, a congratulatory address was unanimously voted to the Duke of Rutland. On one day thirteen petitions from counties and populous boroughs were presented to the house of commons by their respective representatives, praying a reform in the state of the representation of the people in parliament. The nation was now in the height of a political fever: elated with what they had obtained; soured by disappointment at being refused what they were taught to believe was still wanting to complete their freedom. The undisguised attempts both of parliament and government to discredit and dissolve the volunteers; the failure of the opposition to procure a reduction of the military establishment at the return of peace, all tended to foment jealousies between the citizen and the soldier\*.

Bill for par-  
 liamentary  
 reform lost.

Mr. Flood had no sooner returned from England, than he moved for leave to bring in a bill for a more equal representation of the people in parliament. It was vehemently urged by Mr. Flood, and supported, though less warmly, by Mr. Grattan. The numbers

\* Every circumstance tending to alienate the minds of the citizens from the soldiery is, in our constitution, of more than ordinary consequence. A riot had lately happened at Island Bridge, where the outrages of the soldiery had exceeded the rules of military discipline, or even common humanity. This exasperated the populace. In retaliation, they had recourse to the barbarous practice of houghing the soldiers, whenever they found them straggling and off their guard. This induced General Luttrell to bring in a bill to give better protection to soldiers, and others, against the barbarous practice of houghing.

sion were 85 for reform, and 159 against it. Thus 1784.  
was the spirit of the new administration soon discovered to be hostile to the popular wish for reform. The rejection of this and some other popular measures sharpened the animosity of the people even to outrage several of the members in the house of commons.

The severity, with which the house of commons censured the publishers of some popular newspapers, and the lord mayor of Dublin, for not preventing their circulation and calling in the military, added fuel to the discontents of the populace, which at last amounted to a tumultuous rising in Dublin. This unruly spirit of discontent was further fomented by the unpopularity of Sir John Blaquiere's paving bill\*, against which the house would neither hear counsel at their bar nor receive the petition from the inhabitants at large. In this licentious disposition of the public mind, Mr. Foster who had been marked as an object of obloquy in the newspapers, brought in a bill for restraining the liberty of the press, which was the only remaining subject of importance, agitated in parliament during the session. It met with some opposition, though the provisions of it went no further, than to make known the

Causes of  
popular  
discontent.

\* The Recorder reprobated the bill, as a system of unexampled tyranny and oppression. It placed, he said, in the hands of a set of low persons, (for commissioners acting for 150*l.* a year could be no other) a power to fine and torment with all the insolence of authority, every citizen of Dublin. It gave them power to raise taxes, and to borrow money; to summon whomsoever they thought proper before their tribunal; and upon neglect or disobedience, to impose a fine of 40*l.*



1784.

real name of the printer or proprietor of every newspaper. It was however disrelished by the people. Their irritation was also increased by the house of commons having ordered their Serjeant at Arms to take the publishers and printers of the offensive newspapers out of the custody of the civil power, and commit them over to military escorts, under which they were more severely treated, than they could have been by the civil power. These illegal stretches of power were censured in parliament, and produced in that ferment of the public mind the worst of consequences. The proposal of a vote of thanks to the new lord-lieutenant, occasioned heated debates in the commons; and the failure of Mr. Flood's reform bill, and other popular measures did not ingratiate him with the people out of doors.

Parliament  
prolonged,  
and popular  
discontents  
increased.

The first time the Duke of Rutland personally addressed the parliament was in proroguing it on the 4th of May, 1784. The difficulties of the session were greater without, than within the walls of the senate. Appeals were made by some of the members to the armed associations when the session was over, upon the questions lost in parliament. The discontent and violence of the people increased. The populace frequently assembled, and committed outrages, even to the American fashion of "tarring and feathering." More serious consequences were prevented by calling out the military.

Proceed-  
ings for  
parlia-  
mentary  
reform.

A principal objection to the introduction of Mr. Flood's bill for a parliamentary reform was, that it originated with an armed body. The sheriffs and chief

1784.  


magistrates were therefore called upon to convene the inhabitants of their respective counties, fully to discuss that measure ; and a meeting was convened at Dublin on the 7th of June, 1784, where the high sheriffs presided, and at which strong resolutions \* were agreed to. A very animated address from the committee to the people of Ireland was published, and a petition or remonstrance from the freemen, freeholders, and inhabitants of the city of Dublin to the throne, to forward parliamentary reform, and correct many other abuses, was presented to the lord-lieutenant by the high sheriffs, with an address to his excellency requesting it might be transmitted ; to which his excellency answered, that in complying with their request, he should not fail to convey his entire disapprobation of it, as casting unjust reflections upon the laws and parliament of Ireland, and tending to weaken the authority of both. These proceedings of the city of Dublin were seconded by other parts of the kingdom ; but their object was frustrated by the interposition of government. Prosecutions by information were commenced against different persons, by whom such aggregate meetings had been assembled, and Mr. Reily, the high sheriff of the county of Dublin, was sentenced to fine and imprisonment by the Court of King's Bench. Notwithstanding their repeated defeats, such was the credulous enthusiasm of the majority of these advo-

\* They are to be seen, together with the address of the committee to the people of Ireland, and the petition to the throne, in my *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 96 to 103.

1784.



cates for reform, that even after the angry answer of the lord-lieutenant, they could not be persuaded, that either his grace or his reforming colleague, Mr. Pitt, had renounced their principles. On the 8th of July, a petition to the king was conveyed to Mr. Pitt by the inhabitants of Belfast, nearly of the same tenor with that of the citizens of Dublin. In September following, Mr. Pitt by his answer convinced them, how little earnest the new administrations were to promote the reform, which before they came into power they had espoused. He admitted himself still a friend to reform, but on grounds very different from those adopted in their petition. That what was there proposed, he considered as tending to produce still greater evils, than any which the friends of reform were desirous to remedy.

Disunion  
of the vo-  
lunteers,  
and its con-  
sequences.

The cause of reform received a severe blow from the disunion of the volunteers, on the subject of admitting the Roman Catholics to the rights of election. In an address presented by the Ulster corps to their general, the Earl of Charlemont, they hinted at the necessity of calling in the aid of the catholics; to which he objected, not from illiberal prejudice, for he was full of good will towards that respectable body, but because it would fatally clog and impede the prosecution of their favourite purpose. The thanks of the corporation of the city of Dublin were voted him for his conduct on that occasion. The meeting of a national congress was a measure of too alarming a nature, not to attract the serious attention of government. The attorney-general menaced the sheriff, who had



called the meeting for electing delegates. On the other hand, strong resolutions were agreed to upon the right of assembling for redress of grievances. Government from denouncing threats, proceeded to punishments. The high sheriff for the county of Dublin, was proceeded against by attachment from the court of King's Bench. He was again fined and imprisoned. This mode of legal process, which precluded the functions of a jury, met with slight opposition on account of the new division of the volunteers into parties. Informations were also moved for, and attachments granted against the printers and publishers of newspapers for inserting the resolutions, and against the magistrates for signing them. This was one of the first essays of Mr. Pitt's system of preparing the public for strong measures, by creating internal disunion and alarm.

The severity of government deterred not the national congress from meeting according to appointment, although several of its most respectable members absented themselves. They adjourned, after having passed the resolutions agreed upon at the previous meeting, with an exhortation to perseverance in effecting the great and necessary, confirmation of the constitution. The link of unanimity having been once severed, the fall of the armed associations into difference and contention was more rapid, than had been their progress to union. The divisions of the volunteers were encouraged by government; and for that purpose discord and turbulence were rather countenanced than checked in many counties, particularly

1784.

Meeting of  
national  
congress.

1784. upon the delicate and important expedient of admitting the catholics to the elective franchise: a question, which was artfully connected with the now declining cause of parliamentary reform. The desire of disuniting the volunteers begot inattention to the grievances of the distressed peasantry of the south. Once more the *White Boys* committed depredations with impunity, particularly about Kilkenny \*.

Second  
meeting of  
delegates.

As the unanimity of the volunteers diminished, their spirit and exertions abated. On the 2d of January, 1785, a second meeting of the delegates was had at Dublin, at which were present the representatives of twenty-seven counties, and of most of the cities and considerable towns of the kingdom, amounting in the whole to more than 200 persons. Their proceedings were less animated. In general terms, they left the mode of redress to the consideration of parliament. The British parliament sat to the 25th of August, 1784, and met again on the 25th of January, 1785, when his majesty particularly recommended to them the settlement of all differences with Ireland. The parliament of Ireland met about the same time, and went through the usual formalities of a speech from, and thanks to the lord-lieutenant, to which Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Sir Edward Crofton, and other friends of reform, ob-

\* A stop was put to their disturbances by the efforts of the Rev. D. Troy, then the Roman Catholic bishop of Ossory, and the clergy of his diocese. His Pastoral Letter, or Circular Exhortation, may be seen in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LXXIV. on which occasion a letter of thanks was written to him by command of his excellency.

jected on account of the words *firmness and moderation*, which seemed to countenance the illegality of the attachments resorted to by government in lieu of trials by jury. His majesty's answer to the addresses, which was communicated to the commons on the 4th of February, 1785, spoke a very determined language against the attempts of the delegates to dictate to, and overawe the parliament, and increased the popular discontent.

1785.

The session of 1785, in each kingdom, lasted seven months. Both parliaments were chiefly occupied in the commercial arrangements between Great Britain and Ireland. Previous to the meeting of parliament on the 20th of January, the British cabinet, in concert with commissioners appointed on the part of Ireland, had formed the plan, which Mr. Orde laid before the house of commons, in the form of eleven propositions\*. After much debating and considerable opposition, they passed the commons, with an address to the throne; and on the 12th of February, the resolutions and address were sent to the lords, and unanimously agreed to. On the 22d of the month, the eleven resolutions agreed to by the lords and commons of Ireland were read in a committee of the British house of commons, when Mr. Pitt opened the business with much earnestness and apparent sympathy for the degraded state of Ireland. Lamenting that from the revolution almost to that day, the system

Session of  
1785. Irish  
proposi-  
tions.

\* For these propositions and the various proceedings in both parliaments upon them, see my Historical Review, vol. II. p. 142 to 156.



1785.

had been that of debarring Ireland from the enjoyment and use of her own resources; to make the kingdom completely subservient to the interests and opulence of Great Britain, without suffering her to share in the bounties of nature, in the industry of her citizens, or making them contribute to the general interests and strength of the empire. It was at once harsh and unjust, and it was as impolitic as it was oppressive. He reprobated the state of thralldom, in which that country had been systematically kept ever since the revolution. Commercial jealousies in England raised great opposition, and petitions were poured in from all quarters against the Irish propositions. Mr. Pitt, deterred from his original design, brought forward a new set of twenty propositions. The long and interesting debates upon these propositions were closed by a very moving speech of Lord Townshend, whose long residence in Ireland supereminently qualified him to represent faithfully the state of that country. If he had expressed any degree of preference for Ireland, he begged their lordships would impute it to the veneration he bore it, and the obligation he owed for its partiality to his failings; he was naturally, he hoped, the advocate of the oppressed and meritorious; he knew the Irish to be generous and untemperising friends, and who disdained to be behind hand in reciprocity. The propositions, with some amendments, were carried in the lords, by 84 against 30. After a warm debate, the amendments made by the lords were agreed to in the commons. Mr. Pitt then brought in a bill founded upon them, which was

read a first time on the 2d of August: and was followed up by an address to his Majesty, voted by both houses of parliament, wherein they acquainted him with what they had done, and that it remained for the parliament of Ireland to judge and decide thereupon. 1786.

On the 12th of August Mr. Secretary Orde brought in a bill, which was a mere transcript of that moved by the English minister. After a most animated debate, which lasted eighteen hours, the house divided, when there appeared for leave to bring in the bill, 127, against it 108. Such a division in the first stage of the business was equivalent to a defeat: and Mr. Orde having moved the first reading of the bill, declared he did not intend to make any further progress in the business during that session\*. In order to preclude a motion of censure framed by Mr. Flood, the secretary moved an adjournment, which was carried without a division. Public illuminations testified the joy excited by the sudden termination of this extraordinary business, which ended to the great disappointment of the ministry in both kingdoms. It never was resumed in either parliament. Mr. Pitt's conduct in attempting to fetter the commerce of Ireland, from deference to or fear of the commercial interests of Great Britain, produced a renovation of that spirit,

Bill brought into the Irish house of commons.

\* The grounds, upon which the Irish resisted these propositions, were that they went to restrict the commerce of the country, and subject it to the legislative controul of the British parliament. This was a reserved case, out of the new terms of parliamentary management.

1786.

which had formerly produced a non-importation resolution in Ireland. Some tumultuous efforts to carry it into effect were checked by the strong arm of government. Previous to the recess Mr. Pery resigned the Speaker's chair, to which Mr. Foster\* was chosen without much opposition.

Duke of  
Rutland  
meets the  
parliament.

When the Duke of Rutland met the parliament in January, 1786, he hinted in his speech a wish to revive the commercial propositions. The subject, however, was too unpopular to be proceeded on. A police bill was another favourite object of government, strongly recommended to the attention of parliament. It was vehemently opposed by the patriots. Mr. Conolly took a leading part against it. He observed, that under the pretence of police, it went to take away constitution. It was treated by opposition as a most unconstitutional job, a mere bill of patronage for ministerial purposes. Among many petitions against the bill, one was presented from the freeholders of the county of Dublin, by Sir Edward Newnham, which the attorney-general moved to have rejected, as an insult to the house. It was rejected by 118 against Sir Edward Newnham and Colonel Sharman only.

Resolution  
against the  
pension list.

Mr. Conolly and some other gentlemen of great landed property in the country, who had been much in the habit of supporting government, now appeared to have taken a decided part in the opposition to the Duke of Rutland's administration. The grand attack

\* This situation he retained, till the Irish house of commons was annihilated by that very administration, which he supported with indiscriminate tenacity till the measure was resolved on.



1786.

made by the patriots this session, was upon the pension list. A question ever sure to be popular. Mr. Forbes, after an animated speech, moved, that the present application and amount of pensions on the civil establishment were a grievance to the nation, and demanded redress. The motion, after an interesting debate, was lost by a majority of 134 against 78. Mr. Grattan gave great offence to the treasury bench, by causing the whole list to be read aloud by the clerk, and closing the debate with these strong words, *If I should vote, that pensions are not a grievance, I should vote an impudent, an insolent, and a public lie* \*. From the prorogation of parliament the popularity of the Duke of Rutland fell into the contrary spirit of discontent and asperity against him. The city of Dublin, during the recess, was a scene of tumult and disorder. In order to check the enforcing of the non-importation compacts, centinels were placed throughout the city to prevent or give notice of the first appearance of riot, and the garrison was kept in constant readiness for action. The lord-lieutenant, whose manners were naturally adapted to win the favour of the Irish, was received so rudely at the theatre as to have narrowly escaped the personal outrage of the populace.

When the parliament met in January, 1787, the lord lieutenant applied to them for their assistance, in the effectual vindication of the laws and protection of

Session of  
1787.

\* 6 Parl. Deb. Some very strong and sublime parts of the speeches of Mr. Curran and others, on this motion, may be seen in my Historical Review, vol. II. p. 147.

1787.

society, which could only be ensured by their special support of the established church and the respectable situation of its ministers. This referred to the riots of a new set of disturbers in Munster, called *Right-Boys*, from their leader or instigator Captain Right. Mr. Conolly wished to make distinction between the chief governor, whom he knew to be an honest man, and the administration, against which he made the most serious charge\*. Adverting to the proclamations lately issued, stating, that the whole south was in arms, he asked, why government did not suppress these turbulences in their infancy? If they were not exaggerated, government was censurable for not having prevented them: if they were so, they were more criminal for having created ill-founded alarms†.

*Right-Boys.* When the house was in a committee upon that part of his excellency's speech, which related to the commotions in the south, the attorney-general (Fitzgibbon) submitted a curious narrative of facts, which

\* 7 Parl. Deb. p. 21.

† No misconduct of government is more fraught with malevolence and mischief, than that of creating false alarms, with a view of engrafting strong measures upon the timidity of the public. This appears to have been a favourite tactic throughout the whole system of Mr. Pitt's political career. The unprejudiced eye may, from this first essay under his administration, trace the gradual workings of the disasters, into which the latter part of it forced this ill-fated kingdom. The actual state of universal tumult and rising was asserted by ministerial members, and absolutely denied by others resident in the proclaimed counties. Differences of opinion between political opponents is conceivable; but contradiction of notorious facts amongst gentlemen is unaccountable.

1787.

he said had come to his knowledge respecting the proceedings of the insurgents\*. They proceeded from parish to parish swearing in the inhabitants. The first object of their reformation was tithes; they swore not to give more than a certain price per acre; not to take them from the minister at a greater price; not to assist or allow him to be assisted in drawing the tithe, and to permit no proctor. They next took upon them to prevent the collection of parish cesses; then to nominate parish clerks, and in some cases curates; to say what church should or should not be repaired; and in one case they threatened to burn a new church, if the old one were not given for a mass house. At last they proceeded to regulate the price of lands, to raise the price of labour, and to oppose the collection of hearth-money and other taxes. In all their proceedings they shewed the greatest address, with a degree of caution and circumspection, which was the more alarming, as it demonstrated system and design. He was well acquainted with Munster, and it was impossible for human wretchedness to exceed that of the miserable peasantry in that province. He knew, that the unhappy tenantry were ground to powder by relentless landlords†. Their miseries were intolerable, but they did not originate with the clergy; nor could the legislature stand by and see them take redress

\* 7 Parl. Deb. p. 27.

† It is impossible for the historian always to follow the amiable axiom of speaking but well of the dead. Here he is happily justified in saying of Lord Clare, that he was the very best of landlords.



1787. into their own hands. He therefore moved, that further provisions by statute are indispensably necessary to prevent tumultuous rising and assemblies, and for the more adequate and effectual punishment of persons guilty of outrage, riot, and illegal combination, and of administering and taking unlawful oaths. He afterwards brought in a bill to the like effect.

Complaints  
against  
public ex-  
penditures  
ineffectual.

Several gentlemen of the opposition were loud in declaiming against the extravagance of government expenditures, such as allowances to printers of newspapers for inserting proclamations and advertisements, detrimental to the public and disgraceful to the nation; of the sum of 1,266*l.* for repairing the road through the Phoenix Park, through which carts were not permitted to pass; for law bills for prosecuting Right-Boys; for the expence of witnesses attending in London to give evidence concerning the Irish propositions: for building country houses for the officers of the crown, and other charges, scandalously brought against the public. They were all defended by the ministers, and of course none of them remedied. Mr. Conolly, who had intended, in the course of that session, to move an alteration in the tax of hearth-money, declared he would defer his motion till the people should demean themselves more peaceably.

Clause for  
demolish-  
ing the ca-  
tholic cha-  
pels.

Mr. Fitzgibbon's bill for preventing tumultuous risings contained the singular \* clause directing the

\* Of this clause Mr. Grattan said in debate, he had heard of transgressors being dragged from the sanctuary, but he never heard of the sanctuary being demolished. It went so far as to hold out the laws as a sanction to sacrilege. If the Roman Ca-

1787.

magistrates to demolish the Roman Catholic chapels, in which any combinations should have been formed or an unlawful oath administered. Mr. Orde, the secretary, remarked, that he never could have concurred in the clause for pulling down the chapels, and was happy, that it had been abandoned by his friend. He lamented, that any thing should have appeared in print, purporting, that those insurrections had arisen from a popish conspiracy: he declared, he not only did not believe it true, but in several places he knew it not to be true: and affirmed, that the insurgents had in some places deprived the Roman catholic clergy of one-half of their income.

Mr. Forbes brought in his bill for limiting pensions, which had at all times been a favourite object of the patriots: but every former effort to procure it had, like the present, proved abortive. It was a government

Failure of  
pension and  
tithe bills.

tholics were of a different religion, yet they had one common God and one common Saviour with the honorable gentlemen; and surely the God of the Protestant temple, was the God of the Catholic temple. What then did the clause enact? That the magistrate should pull down the temple of his God, and should it be rebuilt, and as often as it was rebuilt for three years, he should again prostrate it, and so proceed, in repetition of his abominations, and thus stab the criminal through the sides of his God: a new idea indeed! But this was not all, the magistrate was to sell by auction the altar of the divinity to pay for the sacrilege, that had been committed on his house. By preventing the chapel from being erected, he contended, that they must prohibit the exercise of religion for three years; and that to remedy disturbance they resorted to irreligion, and endeavoured to establish it by act of parliament.

1787. question, and the bill was lost by a division of 129 against 65. Mr. Grattan, equally anxious to check the lawlessness, and relieve the distresses of the poor, brought forward the subject of tithes\*, in a general resolution, which was negatived without a division. Mr. Orde objected to take the subject under consideration. Even some of Mr. Grattan's friends conceived the motion out of season. It was urged, that to pay any regard to a people in a state of resistance, would be derogatory from the dignity of parliament. He laughed at such language; there could never be a time, when it was improper for the legislature to do justice.

Heard in  
the House  
of Commons.

The bill for the better execution of the laws, and the better preservation of the peace within the counties at large was vehemently opposed by several of the patriots, as if intended to be followed up with a general police bill. It was also particularly objected to, as deviating from the English Riot Act†.

\* He made a most eloquent and impressive speech on this occasion, which may be seen in my *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 164, &c.

† 7 *Parl. Deb.* p. 445. The opposition urged the indecency of bringing on a matter of such importance in so thin a house, where most of those present were aids-de-camp, searchers, packers, gaugers, placemen of all descriptions, and pensioners. The bill would create thirty-two additional judges, annex six hundred magistrates, raise an army of three thousand soldiers, under the name of constables, and change the administration of the justice of the country. It had but two objects; to increase the patronage of the crown, and to overawe the people.

On the further progress of this bill, Mr. Fitzgibbon taunted



1787.

Prorogation  
of parlia-  
ment.

Two other subjects occupied the attention of parliament during the session: the consideration of the commercial treaty with France, and a favourite plan of education, which Mr. Orde had been preparing for two years, and now submitted to the house. It was neither relished nor supported according to his expectations. The parliament was prorogued on the 28th of May, with the usual thanks for the supplies, promises of economy, and a recommendation to the people to be peaceable. In the discussion of the treaty of navigation and commerce with the French king, Mr. Flood, who had been now transplanted into the British senate, made an eloquent speech, in which he was combated by Mr. William Grenville upon the rejection of the Irish propositions, who now admitted them to have been an offer from the British government, though when first brought forward, he had represented them as coming from Ireland. On this occasion Mr. Flood, perhaps the most violent asserter of Irish independence, admitted a political necessity for a controlling superiority in the British parliament, whose indispensable duty it was, in every great national measure, to look to the general interests of the empire, and to see, that no injurious consequences followed to

the opposition bench with their silence, as if proceeding from inability and ignorance, which was highly resented by Mr. John O'Neill; who warned ministry to desist from that overbearing exaltation, with which they carried questions by rank majorities, and insolently attempted to run down country gentlemen from standing up in support of their oppressed countrymen. The attorney-general made a full apology.

1787. the peculiar interests of any part of it. But, as Ireland claimed no such controlling right over Great Britain, the independence of Ireland was not absolute, because not perfectly reciprocal.

Death of  
the Duke  
of Rutland.

The Duke of Rutland died in October, 1787. He was calculated to command the affections of the Irish; being open, free, liberal, and convivial. Too much addicted to the pleasurable indulgences of youth, he committed the management of the public business to those about him. Under him the expences of driving the state equipage through the beaten track increased in an alarming degree. Many, who had most strenuously opposed his administration, rendered willing tribute to his amiable qualities. The errors of his government were attributed to his advisers, and the majority of that house, which had constantly supported them.

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## CHAPTER IV.

*Administration of the Marquis of Buckingham.*

1768.

Marquis of  
Buckingham  
succeeds the  
Duke of  
Rutland.

UPON the death of the Duke of Rutland, Mr. Pitt selected the Marquis of Buckingham as the fittest person to give effect to his system of government over his part of the British empire. When in January, 1768, his excellency met the parliament, his speech bespoke entire approbation of the Duke of Rutland's administration, and called upon the house to pursue the same measures. The address was therefore opposed, by Mr. Parsons, who indignantly spurned the insult of summoning the house to sanction the abominations of the late administration. If, said he, the press be not liberated, attachments discontinued, and the police and riot act be not abandoned, it is evidently the intention of ministers by fomenting discontent and turbulence to goad the country into rebellion.

Upon Mr. Secretary's\* bringing in a bill for recovering a just compensation for tithes withheld in the years 1786 and 1787, Mr. Grattan moved for a committee to enquire, whether any just cause of discontent existed amongst the people of the province of Munster, or of the counties of Kilkenny or Carlow, on account of tithe, or the collection of tithes; and if any,

Tithes.

\* Mr. Fitzherbert, afterwards Lord St Helen's.



1788.

Secret system of the new viceroy.

to report the same, together with their opinion thereupon\*. It was negatived by 121 against 49. Stifling enquiry was a favourite maxim of Mr. Pitt's school.

The new viceroy affected to conceal, even from his friends, the plan and principles of his administration†. As far as could be collected, it was generally concluded, that the late system was to be followed up: consequently the same system of opposition was adhered to. Notwithstanding the new lord-lieutenant's attack upon the subaltern officers of the revenue, and domestic restrictions at the Castle, the gentlemen of the opposition did not give him credit for any economical reform in the original dispensation of the public money. Mr. Forbes was zealous, though unsuccessful, in his efforts against the pension list and other Government extravagances. The attempts of the patriots to enforce economy were baffled by singular logic. The house had, it was observed, given credit to the

\* 8 Parl. Deb. p. 192. The system of tithes in Ireland still calls loudly for reform. Mr. Grattan's wonderful speech upon that important subject will be found in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LXXVIII. It is a master-piece of eloquence and reasoning.

† Amongst the proselytes, that went over to Lord Buckingham was Mr. Longfield, who had considerable parliamentary interest; he and the friends he introduced had uniformly opposed the late administration: amongst these was Mr. Curran, who could not bend his principles to the pliance of his friend, or take a subordinate part in supporting an administration, whose intended measures were made a secret: he therefore purchased a seat in a vacant borough, and offered it to Mr. Longfield for any person, whose principles were at his command.

1759.

present government for their intentions of economy; they were therefore laid under restrictions never imposed on any other government. The most violent attack upon the minister, during this session of parliament, was Mr. Forbes's motion for an address to the crown, in order to leave to posterity, on the face of the Journals, the grievances, under which the people laboured in the year 1788\*. The minister carried the question of adjournment by 103 against 40. Mr. Conolly's motion for the repeal of the hearth-tax was rejected even without a division. Mr. Dennis Browne referred to an assertion of the lord-lieutenant in conversation, that he had rather put his right hand into the fire, than grant a pension to any person, which every honest man should not approve of. Sir Henry Cavendish, though staunchly devoted to that administration, remarked, that doubling the pensions of members might be avoided, "for he, that had 400*l.* a year for his vote, would not refuse voting, though he were to be refused 400*l.* a year more†." The feelings of the people without were in strict unison with the sentiments of the patriots within the walls of parliament; and the lord-lieutenant finding himself pressed by the weight of talent, influence, and popularity of those, who had ranged themselves in opposition to his measures, got rid of them by an early prorogation. This afforded him an opportunity of

\* The detail of grievances, together with the address, are to be seen in my *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 188, &c.

† 8 Parl. Dec. p. 355.

1788. attending more minutely to his favourite system of economical reform.

Economical  
scrutiny into  
the depart-  
ments.

Animated with a laudable indignation against the rapacious and bare-faced practices of the clerks, and other subaltern officers in the different departments of government, his excellency seized all \* their keys, examined himself their papers and accounts, subjected them to the most rigorous scrutiny, and demanded instant payment of outstanding balances. An universal panic seized the whole; many defaulters fled the country, one cut his throat, and some few relying on the sympathies and countenance of their immediate superiors in office, stood the brunt of enquiry, and either eluded by dexterity or softened by false promises the anger of their indignant governor. Some were ultimately dismissed with disgrace. In these secondary departments nothing was so minute, which the scrutinizing eye of his excellency would not descend to inspect. The profligacy of official profusion was incredible: peculation reigned in every department, where public money was handled, or public property disposeable: the public accounts were wound up yearly with formidable balances in the hands of collectors, treasurers, and paymasters, or arrears due by former great officers, who had received their employments without security, or had been discarded for misconduct, or were dead, or had fled, or had become bankrupt. Such was the inveteracy of

\* When Mr. Corry was made surveyor of the ordnance, his first act was, to lock up and seal the desks of the several clerks, who were dismissed instantly.



1788.

his disease, that each preceding viceroy, on close inspection, had been afraid to touch it; until the Marquis of Buckingham, with more courage ventured to develop the dark workings of these official peculators. In the ordnance and treasury, the grossest frauds pervaded almost every department. The public stores were plundered with impunity on open day. The arms, ammunition, and military accoutrements, condemned as useless, were stolen out at one gate, and bought in at the other, and charged anew to the public account. Journeymen armourers, who worked in the arsenal, seldom went home to their meals without conveying away a musket, a sword, or brace of pistols, as lawful perquisites, and sanctioned by the connivance of their superiors. Clerks in subordinate departments, with salaries not exceeding 100*l.* per annum, kept handsome houses in town and country, with splendid establishments; some of them became purchasers of loans and lotteries: all exhibited signs of redundant opulence.

In the course of the year 1788, the county of Armagh was disturbed by the increased animosity and outrages of the Peep of-Day Boys, and Defenders. They had been advancing in numbers, system, and ferocity, ever since the year 1785, when near a thousand men on both sides met for a regular engagement. Originally they were all presbyterians; but in process of time some Roman catholics having enlisted on one side, it was contrived by the party, which they opposed, to denominate them

Peep of Day  
Boys and  
Defenders.

1788.

Papists; and the opposite banners were distinguished by the inflammable appellations of Protestant and Catholic. The protestants taking advantage of the laws against papists having arms, paid their antagonists early domiciliary visits to search for arms, in which they were often guilty of the most wanton outrages; thence they acquired the appellation of Peep-of-Day Boys, whilst the others assumed that of Defenders. Hence the fatal origin of defenderism. In this year recourse was had to the raising of some volunteer corps, under pretext of strengthening the arm of the magistrate. These volunteer corps, which admitted no catholic, sided with the Peep-of-Day Boys, and increased the acrimony and bloodshed. The Defenders were charged with openly sending challenges both to the Peep-of-Day Boys and the volunteers to meet them in the field. The fact was, that the defenders certainly did look upon them both as one common enemy combined to defeat and oppress them: whilst, therefore, this open hostility between the two parties subsisted and rankled under the daily festering sore of religious acrimony, the defenders, who knew themselves armed against law, though in self-defence against the Peep-of-Day Boys, became the more anxious to bring the contest to a trial of strength, rather than remain victims to the repeated outrages of their domiciliary visits, or other attempts to disarm them. Thus a private squabble between two peasants gradually swelled into a village brawl, and ended in the religious war of a whole district.

In the autumn of this year, it was the will of Heaven to visit the British empire with a most distressful calamity. A circumstance, which placed Ireland in a more peculiar delicacy of situation than any other part of the empire. The King had been attacked in the course of the summer with an illness, which, in November, settled in a delirium, which wholly incapacitated his Majesty from performing the functions of the executive. Under these embarrassing circumstances, and in defiance of a most powerful opposition, Mr. Pitt had the address and influence to lay down and successfully put in train, a system of provisional regency, during the uncertain duration of his Majesty's incapacity, fettered and clogged with restrictions and limitations, which it was forcibly urged, were industriously calculated to produce a weak government with a strong opposition. All the princes of the blood, who were then of age, indignantly disclaimed any active interference in the business.

1789.  
King's illness.

It was evidently the intention, and probably the expectation of the British minister, that the two houses of the Irish parliament should follow the example of those of Great Britain. This national calamity had however too recently followed the declaration of Irish legislative independence, to ground any reasonable hopes in the British cabinet, that the parliament of Ireland would be dictated to by a British convention. Many grounds of anxiety, mistrust, and alarm, with reference to the conduct of the Irish on this trying occasion, agitated both the cabinets. The unpopularity of the Marquis of Buckingham: the

Expectations that Ireland would follow the example of Great Britain.



1789. real congeniality of principle in the bulk of the independent Irish with that party, which had given them independence in 1782, and now opposed the galling and humiliating fetters about to be rivetted on the regent; the sympathy of the true Irish character, with the native prowess, generosity, and magnanimity of the prince: the national disgust, contempt, and detestation of any thing mean, sordid, and suspicious: and above all, the brilliant and important occasion of exercising their national independence in ascertaining and establishing the constitutional boundaries of the royal authority in the person of their favourite prince. These considerations deterred them from convening the Irish parliament.

Association test for the new members of parliament.

Amongst the first impressions, which the fatal news of his Majesty's incapacity to exercise the executive functions of government produced upon the greatest part of the Irish nation, was the flattering expectation of soon seeing an end of the administration, which they considered systematically inimical to their welfare. To a change of ministers, they naturally attached a dissolution of parliament. As soon therefore, as the nature of his Majesty's illness was made known, meetings were had throughout the kingdom, and associations formed preparatory to an expected election. A common test was agreed upon to be tendered, and sworn to by every candidate, and the associated electors bound themselves to each other (generally by oath), to vote for no man, who should refuse to subscribe, and swear to the test: the purport of which was: 1°. To vote for a per centage tax upon the

property of all absentees. 2°. For a settlement or commutation of tithes. 3°. For the restoration of the sail-cloth manufacture. 4°. For a bill to limit the pension list, (with a N. B. that it then exceeded that of England by 8000*l*.) 5°. For a reform in the popular representation in parliament. 6thly. For protecting duties.

From England the most unlimited discretion and imperative instructions were received at the castle, to procure a recognition, that whomever Great Britain should appoint as regent, he should, *ipso facto*, be received in Ireland with all the restrictions and limitations imposed by Great Britain; with peremptory orders to convene the parliament the instant his excellency could answer for a majority to carry such a recognition. More than the ordinary means of lure and threat were used to secure a majority. Yet inasmuch as the Leinster, the Shannon, the Tyrone, and most other independent interests in Ireland determinately opposed Mr. Pitt's plan of regency, it was previously known, that government would be left in a minority. They therefore deferred convening the parliament to the 5th of February, when the whole plan had been settled, and submitted to by the Prince in England\*. On the great day of contest upon the regency, Mr. Grattan and Mr. Fitz-

1789.  
Instructions from England to prepare Ireland for a limited regency.

\* In the conversations upon this subject, the character and conduct of the Marquis of Buckingham, were freely canvassed by the different members, under the conviction, that his government would be of very short duration. See Historical Review, vol. II. 230.

1789. gibbon took the lead on the opposite sides. Mr. Fitzgibbon stated the plan of the castle to be limitation and a bill. Mr. Grattan after a most luminous and constitutional speech, moved that an humble address be presented to his royal highness to take upon himself the government of this realm, during the continuation of his Majesty's present indisposition, and no longer, and under the style and title of Prince Regent of Ireland, in the name of his Majesty to exercise and administer, according to the laws and constitution of this kingdom, all regal powers, jurisdiction, and prerogatives to the crown and government thereof belonging. Mr. Fitzherbert and several former supporters of government, supported the address against the dictates of the castle. Mr. Fitzgibbon displayed extraordinary firmness and talent in opposing so powerful and confident a majority. The motion passed without a division. Not so in the lords, there it was warmly debated. The address, upon the motion of the Earl of Charlemont, was carried by a majority of 19\*.

\* 6 Lords, Jour. p. 233. The contents, with the proxies, being 45, and the non-contents 26, a protest was entered by most of the minority, which see in Appendix to the Historical Review, No. LXXX. The address was as follows.

To His Royal Highness GEORGE Prince of WALES.

The humble Address of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in Parliament assembled.

" MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS,

" WE, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the lords spiritual and temporal, and the commons of Ireland in



When both houses waited upon the lord-lieutenant with their address, requesting him to transmit it to his royal highness, his excellency refused to comply; returning for answer, that under the impressions he felt of his official duty, and of the oath he had taken, he did not consider himself warranted to lay before the prince an address, purporting to invest his royal highness with powers to take upon him the government of that realm, before he should be enabled by law so to do; and therefore he was obliged to decline transmitting

1789.

Marquis of  
Buckingham re-  
fuses to  
transmit  
the ad-  
dress.

parliament assembled, beg leave to approach your royal highness with hearts full of the most loyal and affectionate attachment to the person and government of your royal father, to express the deepest and most grateful sense of the numerous blessings which we have enjoyed under that illustrious house, whose accession to the throne of these realms has established civil and constitutional liberty, upon a basis which we trust will never be shaken; and at the same time to condole with your royal highness upon the grievous malady with which it has pleased Heaven to afflict the best of sovereigns.

“ We have, however, the consolation of reflecting, that this severe calamity hath not been visited upon us until the virtues of your royal highness have been so matured, as to enable your royal highness to discharge the duties of an important trust, for the performance whereof, the eyes of all his Majesty’s subjects of both kingdoms are directed to your royal highness.”

“ We therefore beg leave humbly to request, that your royal highness will be pleased to take upon you the government of this realm during the continuation of his Majesty’s present indisposition, and no longer; and under the stile and title of Prince Regent of Ireland, in the name of and on behalf of his Majesty, to exercise and administer according to the laws and constitution of this kingdom, all regal powers, jurisdiction, and prerogatives to the crown and government thereof belonging.”

1789.

their address to Great Britain. Upon this Mr. Grattan afterwards moved, that his excellency having thought proper to decline transmitting the address, a competent number of members should be appointed to present it to his royal highness. This motion was carried by a majority of 130 against 74. The lords appointed the Duke of Leinster and Lord Charlemont, and the commons Messrs. Conolly, J. O'Neil, W. B. Ponsonby, and J. Stewart, commissioners to present the address to the Prince of Wales. Mr. Brownlow proposed a short money bill, in order to prevent the lord-lieutenant from exercising his right of proroguing or dissolving the parliament: which the attorney-general observed, reminded him of Lord Townshend's proroguing the parliament. He recollected when next they met, they voted him an address of thanks, which address cost the nation half a million of money. He hoped never again to see half a million of the people's money employed to procure an address from their representatives\*. The committee

\* The singular coincidence of a falling and rising power acting upon a body of 300 men, at no time famed for inflexibility, running a race of ingratitude for past and avidity for future favors, extracted truths, which might otherwise have lain for centuries smothered under the concordatum of interest, secrecy, and combination. Mr. Fitzgibbon (no man knew better) admitted, that Lord Townshend had paid or granted so much to purchase that majority in parliament, by which he governed to the end of his administration. Of this avowal, or boast, or taunt, or threat of parliamentary venality from the mouth of the attorney general, we have the pointed evidence of Mr. Grattan, (*Answer to Lord Clare's speech, 1800. p. 18*). "*Half a million, or more, was*

1789.

of the two houses of parliament arrived in London on the 25th of February, 1789, and the day following presented their address to the Prince of Wales at Carlton-house. As the convalescent state of his Majesty's health was at that time apparent, his royal highness, after returning his warmest thanks for the address, and expressing the satisfaction he received from the proof it afforded of their loyal and affectionate attachment to the person and government of the King, acquainted them with the fortunate change, that had taken place. Within a few days, he hoped, that the joyful event of his Majesty's resuming his government, would enable him to give them a final answer, and make it only necessary for him to repeat those sentiments of gratitude and affection to the loyal and generous people of Ireland, which he felt indelibly imprinted on his heart.

The happy turn in his Majesty's health worked a stupendous change in the marshalling of the house of commons. As the late gloomy prospect of a change in the Irish administration had driven many gentlemen to the opposition benches, Mr. Grattan, willing to

Turn in the  
house of  
commons.

*expended some years ago to break an opposition; the same, or a greater sum may be necessary now: so said the principal servant of the crown. The house heard him: I heard him: he said it standing on his legs to an astonished and an indignant nation; and he said it in the most extensive sense of bribery and corruption. The threat was proceeded on; the peerage was sold; the caitiffs of corruption were every where; in the lobby, in the street, on the steps, and at the door of every parliamentary leader, whose thresholds were worn by the members of the then administration, offering titles to some, amnesty to others, and corruption to all."*



1789.

avail himself of the earliest fruits of their conversion, successively brought forward all the subjects of popular complaint : namely, a new police bill, a pension bill, a place bill, a responsibility bill, and an absentee bill. Each was lost by gradually increased majorities. The first of these divisions was of 115 in favor of ministry and 106 against it. The debates upon these several questions were more personal and virulent \* than any before known in that house.

King's recovery,  
formally  
announced  
to parliament.

On the 14th of March, his excellency announced the happy event of his Majesty's recovery in a speech from the throne, which Mr. Grattan congratulated the house, was so worded, and the address upon it so properly moved and seconded, as to call for the most cordial unanimity. When Mr. Conolly on the 20th of March communicated to the house of commons the Prince of Wales' answer to the address of both houses of parliament, Lord Henry Fitzgerald moved an address of thanks to his royal highness for his gracious answer ; to which the attorney-general objected. No one supporting the objection, it was withdrawn, and the motion was carried unanimously. His Majesty returned a most gracious answer to the address of the Irish Parliament ; and his excellency appointed a day of public thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the signal interposition of his good providence.

Return of  
the commons  
to their  
stations.

The ferment occasioned in the commons by the late alarm had nearly subsided : the re-establishment

\* The particulars of a violent attack upon Mr. Grattan by Mr. Parsons, and Mr. Grattan's retort, may be seen in *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 256.

1789.

of the old system, and the disappearance of any immediate change in administration, had brought back most of the fugitives to their station, and upon a division on the place bill, there were only 93 for, and 148 against it. Then Sir Henry Cavendish, chairman of the committee on the police accounts, delivered in their report\*, upon which they had come to two resolutions: 1st, That it had appeared to them, that the police establishment had been attended with unnecessary patronage, waste, and dissipation. 2d, That it was their opinion, that the peace and protection of the city of Dublin might be more effectually maintained at a less expence, and that the present system of the police establishment ought to be changed. On the motion of the attorney-general the report was rejected by 132 against 78†. The subject most interesting to Ireland, which occupied parliament during the remainder of the session, was that of tithes. Mr. Grattan upon presenting a bill to appoint commissioners for the purpose of enquiring into the state of tithes in the different provinces, and to report a plan for ascertaining the same, followed it up with an elaborate and eloquent speech‡. The house adjourned from the 8th to the 25th of May, on which day the lord-lieutenant prorogued the parliament, and made

\* 9 Par. Deb. p. 394. This report, which is singularly curious, is to be seen in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LXXXII.

† 9 Par. Deb. p. 424.

‡ It may be seen in the Appendix to my Historical Review, No. LXXXIII. 9 Par. Deb. p. 464.

1789.

a speech of a general nature, without a word of reference to any of the extraordinary circumstances of the session.

Marquis of  
Buckingham's use  
of govern-  
ment in-  
fluence.

No viceroy ever enjoyed a smaller share of popularity in Ireland, than the Marquis of Buckingham. A determined opposition was the consequence. In spite of his boasted principles of economy, he resorted to the late ruinous system of purchasing votes by retail, in order to break through the formidable opposition to his measures. No bounds, no reserve, no decency, were kept in this new canvass for parliamentary influence: the market was overt, and the prices of boroughs, and of pieces of boroughs, and of votes and titles, and of peerages, were brought to as regular a standard as bullion at the mint. Not a peerage, not an honor, not a place, not a pension was disposed of but immediately by government for parliamentary interest, influence, or engagements, varying by gradation from the price of a close borough to a vote upon a single question. Every place, office, or emolument, that could be resumed by government, was granted upon new terms for future services. The Duke of Leinster, Mr. G. Ponsonby, Mr. Fitzherbert\*, and every person holding place, office, or pension at pleasure, were displaced or deprived for having joined in the address to the Prince of Wales. A creation of eight peerages took place, and numerous new appoint-

\* During a short recess the Hon. Mr. Hobart, (the present Earl of Buckinghamshire) was appointed Secretary in lieu of Mr. Fitzherbert, (afterwards Lord St. Helens), who gave a rare example of sacrificing place to principle.



ments were made. It was objected to the Marquis of Buckingham's administration, that notwithstanding his professions of economizing he had increased the pension list by 13,000*l.* per annum, and by splitting places, reviving dormant employments, and encreasing salaries, had burthened the nation with an additional perpetuity of 2800*l.* per annum. The public thanksgiving for the King's recovery was celebrated by a most superb gala at the castle; but none of those gentlemen were invited to partake of it, who had voted for the address. A marked sign of reprobation was put on their heads: and so strongly was the spirit of party kept up, that in the list of toasts drunk after dinner at the castle, the Prince of Wales and Duke of York were purposely omitted\*. The extraordinary zeal of the attorney-general on the late occasions, in support of government, was rewarded with the great seal of Ireland, which had become vacant by the death of Lord Lifford. He was the first Irish chancellor appointed by England.

1789.

The Marquis of Buckingham grew daily more and more dissatisfied with his situation in Ireland. He had regained a majority in parliament, but he never more

Lord Buckingham dissatisfied, retires to England.

\* In England some persons had rather unwarrantably represented Mr. Pitt to have said, during the debate on the regency, that he had as much right to be regent, as his Royal Highness. At this national festival, the Marquis of Buckingham offered that minister to the notice and gratitude of the kingdom of Ireland, next to the King and Queen, not only in priority but in exclusion of the Prince of Wales, by proposing *the health of Mr. Pitt, the friend of Ireland, with three times three.* Trivial circumstances often disclose designs of magnitude.

1789. experienced that popularity, which had hailed his first appointment under Lord Shelburne. The spirit of party ran so high, and the chief governor felt so sensibly his want of popularity, that in the month of June he took shipping \* for England, and never more returned to Ireland. On the 30th of June, 1789, the new chancellor Fitzgibbon and Mr. Foster the speaker were sworn in lords-justices.

\* His excellency took shipping from Mr. Lee's villa at the Black Rock. It was observed by Mr. Charles O'Neale, in a debate, 10 P. D. p. 118, that if he had not taken a back-stairs departure from that kingdom, he would in all probability have been greeted on his retreat in a very different manner from what he had been on his arrival in Ireland. His opponents gave out, that his excellency was secretly conveyed on board a ship. His friends assert, that his health was so impaired by the fatigues of a troublesome government, that he was conveyed in a litter upon men's shoulders to the ship, in which he took his passage. The bad state of his health must have naturally induced him to avoid publicity and bustle in his departure, which his opponents might have misconstrued into conscious privacy and absconding. Whether the character and conduct of Lord Buckingham were not congenial with the then predominant feelings of the Irish people, or that the system of Mr. Pitt's government, which that nobleman most zealously supported, was not acceptable to them; certain it is, that his excellency's departure from Ireland created little regret or sorrow throughout the kingdom.

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## CHAPTER V.

*Administration of the Earl of Westmoreland.*

1790.

THE Earl of Westmoreland succeeded the Marquis of Buckingham in the government of Ireland. It was observed by some of the opposition, that the change was but a continuance of the former administration, under a less unpopular head: the secretary and most other servants of the crown were continued in office. Strong effects were produced by the establishment of a Whig club in Ireland, in imitation of that of England. It was a frequent theme of panegyric to Mr. Grattan, and of invective to Mr. Fitzgibbon. The heads of most of the great families were members of it, and it contributed not lightly to give popularity to the leading objects of their institution, which it was the uniform policy of Mr. Pitt's system to counteract. The administration of the Marquis of Buckingham formed an eventful era in the modern history of Ireland. Thence evidently is traced the commencement of those popular workings, which ended in the explosion of 1798. Parties are at issue upon the effects of the system. The Whigs contend, that the people were goaded into rebellion by it's impolicy and atrocity; the friends of Mr. Pitt lay the salvation of the country to it's wisdom and firmness. Facts bespeak their own consequences. When the poor in Munster, from the



1790.

failure of Mr. Grattan's motion for their relief, despaired of redress, fresh disturbances broke out, and the military force was consequently encreased. In the north, the Peep-of-Day Boys had acquired an ascendancy over the Defenders. Their enmity was wickedly fomented by the upper orders, for the purpose of breaking up that union of protestants and catholics, which had been effected by their serving together in the volunteer corps. In Armagh, the most protestant county of Ireland, the Defenders were goaded into a more systematic resistance, by the encreasing frequency and atrocity of the domiciliary visits for disarming them, under pretext of the law's disabling catholics from bearing arms: but which these Defenders, who were mostly catholics, now found necessary for self-defence. Government sent down some troops of horse, which secured tranquillity, whilst they remained on the spot. The contests were so serious, that in the absence of the troops, fifty of a side have fallen in a day. The Defenders organized and strengthened themselves. \* They afterwards became more formidable; but were never aggressors, till they were compelled to emigrate from their own district.

Parliament  
meets. In-  
effectual ef-  
forts of the  
patriots.

Lord Westmoreland met the parliament on the 21st of January, 1790. The whole of this session was a series of violent though fruitless struggles for the great points, which the patriots contended they were entitled to by the constitution, and had pledged themselves to their country to persevere in pressing upon

\* The oath and rules of the Defenders are to be seen in vol. II. Historical Review, p. 276.

the government till granted. When the address was moved, \*Mr. Grattan strongly marked his disapprobation of the measures of the late administration; they had been *ill governed*. He pressed upon the increase of the pension list, and the expences of the ordnance†. He moved, That the resolutions of that

1790.

• 10 Parl. Deb. p. 7.

† Mr. Grattan's oratory is not only sublime, but historically instructive, (10 Parl. Deb. p. 15). "Such has been the conduct of your reformer. This was the man; you remember his entry into the capital, trampling on the hearse of the Duke of Rutland, and seated in a triumphal car, drawn by public credulity; on one side fallacious hope, and on the other many-mouthed profession; a figure with two faces, one turned to the treasury, and the other presented to the people; and with a double tongue, speaking contradictory languages.

"This minister alights; justice looks up to him with empty hopes, and speculation faints with idle alarms; he finds the city a prey to an unconstitutional police—he continues it; he finds the country overburthened with a shameful pension list—he increases it; he finds the house of commons swarming with placemen—he multiplies them; he finds the salary of the secretary increased to prevent a pension—he grants a pension; he finds the kingdom drained by absentee employments, and by compensations to buy them home—he gives the best reversion in the country to an absentee, his brother! He finds the government at different times had disgraced itself by creating sinecures, to gratify corrupt affection—he makes two commissioners of the rolls, and gives one of them to another brother; he finds the second council to the commissioners put down because useless—he revives it; he finds the boards of accounts and stamps annexed by public compact—he divides them; he finds three resolutions, declaring, that seven commissioners are sufficient—he makes nine; he finds the country

1790. house against increasing the number of the commissioners of the revenue and dividing of the boards, be laid before his Majesty, with an humble address, that his Majesty would order to be laid before them the particulars of the representations, in consequence of which two new commissioners of the customs had been added, notwithstanding the resolutions of that house; and also that his Majesty would communicate the names of the persons concerned in recommending that measure. The motion was vehemently opposed by government, and negatived upon a division, by 135, 80 only having voted for it. The like fate attended the motion of Mr. Curran, for the particulars of the causes, consideration, and representations, in consequence of which the boards of stamps and accounts had been divided, with an increase of salary to the officers; and a communication of the names of the persons, who had recommended that measure. Thus also failed Mr. Forbes's efforts for a place bill and a pension bill. Each debate grew warmer than the preceding. The opposition upbraided the treasury benches with being bought and hired to vote against their convictions and the welfare of their country; they taunted them with the want of ability, honour, and honesty. The attorney-general charged his opponents with imperious turbulence and overbearing, to attain that power, which they envied in others. On

has suffered by some peculations in the ordnance—he increases the salaries of offices, and gives the places to members; to members of parliament."



this occasion the opposition increased by twelve. In 1790. the like proportion was outvoted Mr. George Ponsonby's motion for disclosing the names of those, who had abused the confidence placed in them, by advising the growth of public expence, by many new and increased salaries, annexed to offices granted to members of that house, no fewer in number than fourteen. The perseverance and powerful talents, with which Mr. Grattan kept up an aggressive warfare during the whole of this session, rendered him personally obnoxious in proportion as he was formidable to the castle interest.

At the close of a very severe debate, Mr. Grattan gave particular offence to government by a novel mode of arraigning the ministers. He then read the following paper. “ We charge them publicly, in the face of their country, with making corrupt agreements for the sale of peerages, for doing which, we say they are impeachable; we charge them with corrupt agreements for the disposal of the money arising from the sale, to purchase for the servants of the castle seats in the assembly of the people; for doing which we say they are impeachable; we charge them with committing these offences, not in one, nor in two, but in many instances; for which complication of offences, we say they are impeachable; guilty of a systematic endeavour to undermine the constitution in violation of the laws of the land. We pledge ourselves, to convict them. We dare them to go into an enquiry. We do not affect to treat them as other than public malefactors. We speak to them in a style of the most

Mr. Grattan's extraordinary charge against ministers.

1790. mortifying and humiliating defiance. We pronounce them to be public criminals. Will they dare to deny the charge? I call upon, and dare the ostensible member to rise in his place, and say on his honour, that he does not believe such corrupt agreements have taken place. I wait for a specific answer." After some pause, Mr. Secretary Hobart\* replied, that the question related to the exercise of his Majesty's undoubted prerogative, and it would ill become him, upon the investigation of an individual, to say what were the reasons, which had induced his Majesty to bestow upon any person those honours, which the crown alone could constitutionally confer.†

Further efforts of the opposition.

The strongest opposition of the session (viz. 96) was upon Mr. Forbes' moving the place bill to be read a second time, when he asserted, without contradiction, that no less than one hundred and four persons, holding places or pensions, were members of that house; and that since the last session no less than fourteen new places had been created, and bestowed upon members. An interesting debate took place upon the illegality of issuing FIATS for levying unascertained damages. The last contest of the session was upon Mr. Curran's long promised motion, for an address to the throne upon general grievances. After a very pointed detail of the several grievances, abuses, and corruptions, of which the country then com-

\* The present Earl of Buckinghamshire.

† This reply of the secretary gave little satisfaction to the opposition benches, and still less to the people out of doors.

1790.

plained, the address specified, that his Majesty's faithful commons had been informed, that in order to defeat a resistance made in parliament to the will of the minister, great portions of public money had been expended by government in places, pensions, or salaries, to induce individuals to betray the community for such corrupt considerations. That the particular sums so expended had been specified and confessed; and that such a corrupt and desperate practice alarmed them the more, because it had not transpired as a crime to be punished, but had been openly avowed as an instrument of government to be again resorted to. That such exercise of influence had not only been confessed, but defended on a principle most offensive to the feelings, and derogatory from the condition of his Majesty's subjects of Ireland. That when they sought the same securities and provisions for the liberties of the people, which Great Britain had adopted against the corrupt influence of the minister, they had been told, that such provisions, however proper in Great Britain, were not calculated for the meridian of Ireland; for that the government in that country should be stronger than the government in Great Britain, and of course the influence and authority of the people of Ireland comparatively weaker in the balance of the constitution. That such wild and unconstitutional distinction, construing the people of Ireland out of the benefit of equal liberty, to introduce among them a superior degree of corruption and profligacy, called from his Majesty's faithful commons of Ireland the warmest protestations, and they did



1790.



protest against it accordingly. The address was negatived by the usual majority, which had been kept steady in their ranks. This last attack was made not with any prospect of success, but only with a view of transmitting to posterity the real grounds of opposing that system of government, by recording them in the form of an address on the Journals.

Prorogation, dissolution, of the old, and convention of a new parliament.

The parliament was prorogued on the 5th and dissolved on the 8th of April, 1790. The new parliament was summoned to meet on the 20th of May, but before that time was further prorogued to the 10th of July, when it met for dispatch of business. The session lasted only 14 days, during which nothing occurred worthy of notice. The purpose of convening the new parliament was to obtain a vote of credit, which passed for 200,000*l*. The parliament was then prorogued, and did not meet for the dispatch of business, till the 20th of January, 1791.

Lord Westmoreland seeks popularity.

During the recess Mr. Secretary Hobart went to England to concert the plan of the next parliamentary campaign with the British cabinet. It was determined, that the Irish government should unexceptionably pursue the principles and system of Lord Buckingham's administration; the secretary therefore had much consultation with that nobleman. Lord Westmoreland in the mean time omitted no means of acquiring popularity; he visited most of the nobility through the kingdom. His excellency and his lady on all solemn occasions appeared clad in Irish manufactures. He generally endeavoured to render himself affable and accessible \*.

\* He gratified the people of Dublin in particular, by permitting

1791.

First session of the new parliament.

The business of the first session of the new parliament differed little from that of the last. The patriots rather lost strength by the new election. Their numbers at no time during the session exceeded fourscore. But their resolution was more determined than ever. Mr. George Ponsonby in replying to Mr. Cook\*, assured him, that nothing but the hand of death or success should ever induce them to give up their pursuits. All the former subjects of popular complaint were again brought forward with like failure. The minority complained, that the administration did not mean to meet the questions of difference between them by reason and argument, but by that very corruption and influence they were warring against, *dead majorities*. The great strength of the patriots' oratory was employed upon the charge of selling the peerage, and prostituting the price of it to the purchase of seats in parliament. The ministerial members complained of the reiteration of the old charges without new arguments to support them; and insisted that general fame, surmise, and assertion, were no grounds for proceedings in that house. On no occasion did Mr. Grattan exert himself more than on his motion for an Irish East India trade. It was however only supported by 86 against 147.

The political fever of the continent in 1791 became by relation alarming to the British empire, and particu-

Effects of French revolution on Ireland.

the performance of a favourite piece, the *Beggars' Opera*, which in the more austere government of Lord Buckingham had been prohibited.

\* 11 Parl. Deb. p. 384.

1791. larly to Ireland. A country, which had so lately succeeded in a struggle for civil liberty, naturally sympathised with France and Poland, which were engaging in a like cause. But the very mention of civil freedom thenceforth became obnoxious to government. Even the customary commemoration of our own revolution in 1688, was attempted to be damped. The word *liberty* carried with it suspicion, often reprobation. It was the most successful and wicked feature of Mr. Pitt's system to hold out the real Whigs, who continued to oppose his measures upon principle, as factious disturbers of the constitution, with a view to introduce the new fangled principles of revolutionary doctrines. Such was the general panic, such the real or assumed execration of every thing, that had a tendency to democracy, that comparatively few of the higher orders dared avow those principles, which two years before they boasted of professing. Mr. Burke, by his book on the French revolution \* worked a stupendous change in the public

\* The political change of the public mind about this period, was evidently productive of the most unprecedented system of strong and coercive measures, known since the Revolution within the British empire. A very decided majority both within and without the parliament of Great Britain favoured that system: in Ireland the people more generally resisted its introduction and influence. Mr. Burke had the merit, if merit it were, of causing the great defection from the Whig Party: he and his friends, who went over to government on that occasion, were the most forward and zealous in holding out the dwindled phalanx of opposition, as enemies to their country and constitution. The fervor of the new converts for proselytizing their old associates was unbounded; the old leaders of the court party triumphantly indulged in the easy decomposition of their opponents



mind. The alteration of political sentiment in Ireland did not however keep pace with that of Great Britain. The defection from the ranks of opposition in parliament was comparatively trivial. The general disposition of the people to civil liberty was sharpened by the increase of coercion and intimidation. Some ill-minded and artful demagogues availed themselves of the popular fever, which had never totally abated from the year 1782. The pernicious doctrines of Mr. Payne, artfully mixed up with popular truisms, were circulated at the lowest price, distributed *gratis*, and imbibed with insatiable avidity: the castle-gates were trebly barred against concession and indulgence; and every effort to attain them at a time so critically awful, was pronounced hostile, and a future bar, even to seasonable application. The spiritual guardians of the great body of the Irish people, circulated pastoral instructions through their dioceses, to dehort their congregations from imbibing the pernicious doctrines so sedulously attempted to be spread amongst them, and to enforce subordination, peace, and loyalty in their conduct.

1791.

On the 11th February, 1791, a meeting was con-

Catholic  
committee.

both concurred in stamping the few, who steadily retained their principles, with all the odium, contempt, and malevolence, that ingenuity could fix to the new terms, *Jacobins and Democrats*. Thenceforth a new and sable tinge was thrown upon every attempt in parliament to urge any popular measure, that would lately have been considered patriotic and constitutional. It is not a little remarkable, that the first time Mr. Burke publicly avowed his new creed, and seceded from the opposition, was on Mr. Flood's motion in the British house of commons for enquiring into the state of the popular representation in parliament.

1791.

vened at Dublin of the general committee of the Catholics of Ireland, at which the different resolutions and instructions from various parts of the kingdom were read. They came to the unanimous resolution of applying for such relief, as the wisdom and justice of parliament might grant; and they hoped to be restored, at least, to some of the rights and privileges, which had been wisely granted to others, who dissented from the established church; that they might be thus enabled to promote, in conjunction with the rest of their fellow-subjects, the present and future happiness and strength of their country. It was impossible, that the disposition to civil liberty, which from the first institution of the volunteers had pervaded Ireland, should have remained inactive upon the great mass of the community, who were catholics. So little prominent however were they as a body, in bringing forward their own claims, that it had been frequently questioned at public meetings in then orth, whether on that account they were sincere in the cause of liberty.

Division of  
the catholic  
body.

The *anti-gallic* influenza, which in Great Britain had produced such convulsive effects upon political, social, and domestic order, planted discord in the catholic body in Ireland. About threescore of the principal country gentlemen, in conjunction with the Earl of Fingal, Lord Kenmare, and some of the dignified and other clergy, had that year seceded from the committee, under an apprehension of it's being too closely connected with the patriots of the North, and not wholly unfriendly to the principles of the French

revolution. Hence the catholic body was divided into an aristocratic and a democratic party. Such at least was it represented to the public. The division was maintained with considerable acrimony. The Hon. Simon Butler, Theobald Wolfe Tone, and Todd Jones, zealous friends of freedom, proffered their services to the catholic committee, and published in their own names, some very able and strong arguments for the repeal of all restrictive laws against the catholics. These publications contained language more bold and decisive than had hitherto ever been adopted in urging the claims of that body. Some also of their own body followed the example of these protestant gentlemen, and publicly spoke a language, which had before never come from the mouth or pen of any one of that persuasion in Ireland. Nothing could be more offensive to government than this connexion between the Catholics and the Dissenters. The first petition prepared by the committee never was presented to parliament. They entered also into some resolutions, which reflected not tenderly upon the seceders\*.

In the month of June, 1791, a paper was circulated in Dublin, containing the design of an association to be called the Society of United Irishmen at Belfast: a plan of the society was published in the Northern Star in October following. In the same month the Roman Catholics published a declaration of their tenets and claims, in order to remove prejudices, and

1791.

United  
Irishmen  
of Belfast  
and Dub-  
lin.

\* This petition and the resolutions are to be seen in the Historical Review, vol. II. p. 324, &c.



1791. spirit up the exertions of their friends in their cause\*. In the ensuing month of November, a similar society of United Irishmen was established at Dublin: their declaration was the same as that of Belfast: but a test was annexed to it†. To this society Mr. James Napper Tandy was secretary, and Mr. Simon Butler, chairman. It was now the fixed, perhaps improvident system of the castle to involve all societies, clubs, and associations, in one common anathema of faction and sedition.

Popularity  
discouraged at the  
castle.

Every attention to popular character was an offence of no mean standard at the castle. When Lord Charlemont sailed for England, the Whig Club, and all the volunteer corps in Dublin attended him under arms to the water-side, and paid him the like honours on his return. In the course of the summer this nobleman found himself under the necessity of resigning the government of the county of Armagh. A confidential honor, which his ancestors had uninterruptedly enjoyed from the days of Elizabeth. He considered the joint appointment of another nobleman with himself in that government, as an offence and insult. His

\* This declaration was made on the 21st of October, 1791, and may be seen in the Appendix to the Historical Review, No. LXXXIV.

† It is requisite to shew, that these first societies of United Irishmen differed from those that afterwards entered into the rebellion. Here nothing was secret, nothing ambiguous, nothing inconsistent with the duty of a loyal subject. Their test and constitution are to be seen in the Appendix to the Historical Review, No. LXXXV.

1792.

lordship's predilections for the dissenters were particularly obnoxious to government: for the efforts of the northern dissenters in the cause of liberty were infinitely more dreaded by government, than the claims of catholic emancipation. The anniversary commemoration of the French revolution was celebrated on the 14th of July, by the inhabitants and neighbourhood of Belfast. All the armed corps of volunteers attended. These public acts of the protestants in the north gave heinous offence to government, and Messrs. Tone, Simon Butler, and Todd Jones, were the avowed friends and advocates of the catholic committee. Some of the catholic gentlemen of landed property, who disapproved of these societies, seceded formally from the catholic committee; and on the 27th of December, 1791, presented to the lord-lieutenant a petition or address, which went no farther than a general expression of submissiveness and respect to government, throwing themselves and their body upon their humanity and wisdom\*. Three days after, the United Irishmen of Dublin published a circular letter, containing a declaration of their political sentiments, and their test†, and animadverting severely upon the 64 addressers.

The year 1792 opened scenes peculiarly important to Ireland. The whole catholic body on different

Com-  
mence-  
ment of  
catholic re-  
lief.

\* A copy of the address, with the names of those who subscribed it, is to be seen in the Appendix to Historical Review, No. LXXXVI. It highly displeased the opposite party, and many severe things were said upon the 64 addressers. It was called the *elemosynary address*.

† For this declaration, vide Appendix, No. LXXXVII.

1792.

grounds, was now worked up to a lively expectation of relief. The addressers superadded to the equitable grounds of their claims, the submissiveness and respect of their application, and their confidence in the humanity and generosity of ministers. The petitioners relied more on the dry force of truth and equity, than on the liberality or justice of government. The late political change in the public mind had been mainly produced by the writings of Messrs. Burke and Payne: between these two extremes, no middle post was tenable. In order, therefore, to purge themselves of that levelling democracy, which was so peculiarly obnoxious to government, the catholic committee chose for their counsel and agent the son of Mr. Burke; conceiving, that he would give no advice, concur in no measure, abet no step, without the privity, direction, and approbation of his father: and it was no unfair conclusion on the part of the generality of the catholic body, that whatever was backed and supported by Mr. Burke\*, could not

\* It had been concerted, and it was soon after well known, that Mr. Burke's particular friend, Sir Hercules Langrishe, was to bring forward the Roman Catholic bill. Mr. Burke on that occasion wrote a very able letter, or rather a most constitutional essay, on the subject to his friend. This letter is of material importance to the history of the progress of Catholic emancipation. Sir Hercules Langrishe was the man fixed upon by government to bring forward the subject of their claims. He had formerly been favorable to them: but his sentiments had been latterly somewhat altered by the fashionable cry against all popular claims, and his fear of opposing the system of the castle, which had ever been the polar star of his political navigation. In the Historical Re-



be urged or claimed upon French principles. The great object of political attention in the year 1792, was the question of opening some constitutional rights to the catholics. The transactions of this year have been misrepresented. Although it be notorious, that no member of opposition brought forward or moved any thing on behalf of the catholics during the session, (except the presentation of petitions) and that the bill brought in by Sir Hercules Langrishe, an invariable supporter of government, had been fully approved of by government before it was presented: yet has the Earl of Clare in the most extraordinary manner declared, that “ \* with respect to the old code of the Popery laws, there could not be a doubt, that it ought to have been repealed. It was impossible, that any country could continue to exist under a code, by which a majority of its inhabitants was cut off from the rights of property. But in the relaxation of these laws there was a fatal error. It should have been taken up systematically by the ministers of the crown, and not left in the hands of every individual, who chose to take possession of it, as an engine of power or popularity. This, however was done.” The catholics, anxious to be relieved from the hardships they had so long laboured under, could not be insensible of the unaccustomed sympathy and liberality of any of their Protestant countrymen. They did not weigh to a

view, vol. II. p. 338, &c. may be seen Mr. R. Burke's defence of the petitioners against the addressers: and a full refutation of the charges thrown upon the conduct of the committee.

\* Speech of the Earl of Clare, on the 10th of February, 1800.

1792.

scruple those differences, by which the religious tenets of the established church and the Dissenters varied from their own; nor did they open old accounts to discover, whether the asperity of puritanical rigor had been softened by the assumption of Protestant ascendancy. Whoever, upon the broad basis of constitutional freedom avowed the principle of their emancipation was naturally received with cordiality. Although the catholics were not generally admitted into the different societies lately instituted for promoting the popular objects of civil freedom and reform, yet it was morally impossible, that many catholic individuals should not have sympathized with their protestant brethren in forwarding them. Nothing however had been attempted by them as a body towards their attainment. Their exertions were exclusively confined to the relaxation of the penal code.

Parliament  
meets.

On the 19th of January, 1792, the parliament was opened in the usual manner. Mr. Grattan objected to that part of the address, which went to thank his Majesty, for continuing in the government of that country a lord-lieutenant, whose measures he had found it necessary to resist, and who had uniformly opposed every measure urged for the good of their country. Ten years, said he, had elapsed since they had recovered their constitution, and three since they had lost it. Their present ministers had made two attempts on their liberties; the first had failed, the second had succeeded. They could remember the propositions: the people of Ireland would not consent to be governed by the British parliament; an expedient was devised; let the Irish

1792.  


parliament govern the people of Ireland, and Britain govern the Irish parliament. This measure was defeated by the influence principally of that part of the aristocracy, who refused to go through the bill, and who had been dismissed. They, who made the attempt had been advanced and rewarded. The path of public treachery in a principal country leads to the block; but in a nation, governed like a province, to the helm. The second attempt was their modelling of the parliament in 1789, by the expenditure of the interest of half a million to buy the house of commons; the sale of the peerage, and the purchase of seats in the commons; the formation of a stock-purse by the minister to monopolize boroughs, and buy up representations. That new practice, whereby the minister of the crown became the common borough-broker of the kingdom, constituted an offence so multitudinous, and in all its parts so criminal, as to call for radical reformation, and exemplary punishment; whether the persons concerned were Lord Buckingham or his secretary, or those, who became the objects of his promotion, because they had been the ministers of his vices. It was a conspiracy against the fundamental laws of the land, and sought to establish, and had established, in the place of a limited monarchy, a corrupt despotism. The chancellor of the Exchequer answered, that the right honorable gentleman had merely recapitulated the old invectives of many sessions; they had been already refuted, and if they were brought forward in the course of that session, they would be refuted again.



1792.

Sir Hercules  
Langrishe  
moves the  
catholic bill.

On the 25th of January, 1792, Sir H. Langrishe rose, according to notice, to bring forward some resolutions in favour of the catholics. He prefaced his motion by a warm and able, though very guarded speech. He went through all the concessions made to them by the legislature. He confessed his ardour had been checked by the general circulation of wild principles of democracy, with which some attempts had been made to connect the cause of the catholics. He had then, however, the happiness to assert from authority, what he had long learned from experience: that not a sentiment of that tendency was entertained by the catholic body; none such belonged to them; they renounced them; they utterly disclaimed them. There was not a class of his Majesty's subjects more attached than they were to the monarchy and hereditary succession, more obedient to the laws, or more devoted to the king and constitution, as by law established. It was under such conviction, that he addressed them with confidence for a further repeal of the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, to that extent, which their wisdom and liberality should lead them to think expedient. What that extent should be, appeared to him the only question, that could divide the opinion of parliament on the subject.

1st. He would give them the practice and profession of the law, as a reasonable provision, and application of their talents to their own country.

2dly. He would restore to them education, entire and unrestrained; because a state of ignorance was a state of barbarity. That would be accomplished by

taking off the necessity for a license, as enjoined by the act of 1782. 1792.

3dly. He would draw closer the bonds of intercourse and affection, by allowing intermarriage, repealing that cruel statute, which served to betray female credulity, and bastardize the children of a virtuous mother,

4thly. He would remove those obstructions to arts and manufactures, that limited the number of apprentices, which were so necessary to assist and promote trade. He then moved, "That leave be given to bring in a bill for removing certain restraints and disabilities, under which his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects labour from statutes at present in force." Mr. Hobart seconded the motion, without making any observation. Leave was given to bring in the bill, and a committee appointed to prepare the same, without a dissenting voice.

No sooner had this leave been given, than Mr. O'Hara after having expressed his hearty concurrence in what had been done, suggested, that in order to have the subject fully before the house, it was desirable, that they should know exactly the particulars, in which the Roman Catholics desired relief: and they might easily draw the line by the new act of parliament so strongly, as to preclude any expectation of change, at least, for many years to come. Those considerations (he said) had induced him to listen to the desire of a very particular friend of his, to lay a petition containing such a statement before the house. A friend, who was not of the Roman Catholic persua-

Mr. O'Hara  
presents a  
petition  
from the  
committee.

1792.

sion, but one, to whom he would not willingly refuse any thing he could ask, had desired him, as a personal favour, to present it. Though he did not know the petitioners, he knew the integrity of his friend, who told him they were altogether worth upwards of a million, which he mentioned to shew, that they were considerable individuals, whose sentiments might be supposed to coincide with the greater part at least of the Roman Catholics. However, though he presented the petition, he requested not to be considered as its particular patron; for he had agreed to present it upon the terms only of reserving to himself the full liberty of discussing every part of it, and condemning or approving, as he might think proper. Under these circumstances, he ventured to offer the petition to the house; and the rather, because to petition parliament was a matter of right in the subject; and a member could hardly refuse to present a petition, if required by no improper description of men; but more particularly, because the petition brought information before the house, which might be useful in framing the bill. The petitioners, after stating the particulars, in which they hoped for relief, promised to acquiesce in whatever relief parliament might think proper to give them\*. The solicitor-general said, the petition,

\* Whilst Mr. Sheridan was observing, that it was a very odd way of introducing a petition, to state that it came not from any particular body of men, but from an intimate acquaintance, Mr. R. Burke, the gentleman alluded to by Mr. O'Hara, having incautiously ventured into the body of the house behind the speaker's



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in its present state of abandonment, could be no object of notice: he therefore moved the question of adjournment. Mr. D. Brown was for receiving the petition. However, Mr. O'Hara withdrew it for the present, because he could not say he had seen the petitioners sign it: he should present it another day\*.

Catholic  
bill.


The catholic committee anxious to act in full concert with Sir Hercules Langrishe, as he was well known to do nothing without the privity and approbation of government, entered into some† unanimous resolutions calculated to counteract the effects of the misrepresentations and calumnies of their enemies. On the same day, Sir Hercules Langrishe‡ introduced his bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics: it was read and ordered to be printed. Four days after, Mr. John O'Neil presented a petition from Belfast signed by more than six hundred persons of

chair, to speak with Mr. O'Hara, there arose a general cry of "into custody!" He instantly withdrew.

\* Mr. Grattan, feeling that this treatment of a petition signed by so considerable a portion of the community, was rather insulting, closed a very impressive speech in the following words: What you give to the Roman Catholics, give it liberally: what you refuse, refuse decently: whatever you do, do it with discretion: whatever you say, let it be the language of decency and good manners.

† These resolutions may be seen in vol. II. of Historical Review, p. 359.

‡ 12 Parl. Debates, p. 59.

1792.  respectability; praying that the legislature would repeal all penal and restrictive laws against catholics, and put them on the same footing with their protestant fellow-subjects. On the 11th of February, before the catholic bill committed for that day, was called on, Mr. Stewart made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. George Ponsonby, beseeching his Majesty to take into his consideration the situation of the presbyterian ministers of the province of Ulster, and to make such further provision for them, as in his wisdom and bounty he should think fit; and that the house would make good the same. Sir Edward Newenham and others bore testimony to the loyalty and virtues of the protestant dissenters. As parliament was about granting favors to the catholics, they could not refuse justice to the presbyterians.

Petition of  
the catholic  
committee,  
and progress  
of the bill.

The great body of the catholics was little satisfied with the concessions contained in the bill of Sir Hercules Langrishe. They were convinced, that this bill had been substituted for another, of more extensive concession, which had been intended and would have been obtained, but for the arts of some designing, and the credulity of some honest men. Whilst the bill was in progress, the catholic committee prepared a petition, calculated to meet the objections raised against their proceeding. It was signed by fifty of the most respectable catholic commercial characters in Dublin, on behalf of themselves and their brethren throughout the king-

dom\*. It was presented by Mr. Egan, and was ordered to lie on the table. When the catholic bill was debated, all cautiously confined their ideas of indulgence to the points of the bill: and many took that opportunity of pledging themselves never to grant the elective franchise as a concession in-

1792.

\* 12 Parl. Deb. p. 125.

" To the Right Hon. the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses, in Parliament assembled.

" The Petition of the undersigned Roman Catholics, on behalf of themselves and the Roman Catholics of Ireland,

" HUMBLY SHEWETH,

" That as the house has thought it expedient to direct their attention to the situation of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and to a further relaxation of the penal statutes still subsisting against them, they beg leave, with all humility, to come before the house with the most heartfelt assurance of the wisdom and justice of parliament, which is at all times desirous most graciously to attend to the petitions of the people; they therefore humbly presume to submit to the house their entreaty, that they should take into their consideration whether the removal of some of the civil incapacities, under which they labour, and the restoration of the petitioners to some share in the elective franchise, which they enjoyed long after the revolution, will not tend to strengthen the protestant state, add new vigour to industry, and afford protection and happiness to the catholics of Ireland; that the petitioners refer with confidence to their conduct for a century past, to prove their uniform loyalty and submission to the laws, and to corroborate their solemn declaration, that if they obtain from the justice and benignity of parliament, such relaxation from certain incapacities, and a participation in that franchise, which will raise them to the rank of freemen, their gratitude must be proportioned to the benefit, and that enjoying some share in the happy constitution of Ireland, they will exert themselves with additional zeal in its conservation."



1792. compatible with the protestant ascendancy. Mr. Grattan, though instructed to oppose the bill by his constituents, the corporation of Dublin, would not sacrifice the rights and interests of three millions to the caprice or prejudice of some individuals. The house resolved itself into a committee on the bill after midnight, and Mr. Secretary Hobart, not wishing to precipitate matters suggested, that the chairman should report progress, and leave was given to sit again on the 20th of February. On that day Mr. David La Touche moved, that the petition of the catholic committee should be rejected, and after a violent debate it was rejected by 208 against 23. The petition from Belfast was rejected by a larger majority. The bill passed without further opposition. The state of parties in the house of commons was much the same, as it had been in the two preceding sessions. Mr. George Ponsonby, after a warm debate on the East India bill, renewed his profession, that he never would vote with any administration, until that and the other measures, to which he and the other gentlemen, with whom he acted were pledged, should have been obtained. The other patriotic bills were again brought forward and again rejected\*. An interesting and heated debate arose out of Mr. Browne's motion to repeal an act of the last session for appointing a weigh-master for the city of Cork†. After prefacing his motion by animadverting on the conduct of administration in

\* 15 Com. Journ. p. 87.

† 12 Parl. Deb. p. 270.

1792.  


pursuing that dangerous and unconstitutional system, which they had laid down and strictly adhered to, of creating influence, he severely reprobated the appointment made by government to the office of weigh-master of Cork, which had been divided into three parts, and bestowed on members of parliament, for the purpose of creating parliamentary influence. The office had been violently taken from the corporation of Cork. The minister opposed the motion, on the ground of its being an insult on the crown. Colonel Hutchinson\* said, he never should cease to claim the common law-right of the corporation of Cork, whilst he had a seat within those walls. The corruptions of ministers were not to divest private rights. And Mr. George Ponsonby observed, that before this grant, administration had already one hundred and ten placemen and pensioners, and that was sufficient to carry any measure they might want, without creating such additional influence. Never was this gentleman more animated against the system of government then prevailing, than on this occasion. He laid open to the house the whole train of negociations for † proselytizing for the Marquis of Buckingham's administration.

\* Now Lord Hutchinson.

† He was one of the persons dismissed from office at that time; yet he received a message from Lord Buckingham, through the attorney-general (afterwards Earl Clare), "that if he would consent to support his administration, he should not only hold any office, but receive any favour government had it in their power to bestow." His answer was, "that he was ready at all times to serve the king's government, but his own consistency never would permit him to support a lord-lieutenant, on whose

1792.

Parliament  
prorogued.

When the money bills were carried up to the lords, the speaker addressed the lord-lieutenant, in an adulatory speech, strongly inculcating the necessity of keeping up the protestant ascendancy, and with it the continuance of the many blessings the kingdom then enjoyed. After an adjournment for about one month the parliament was prorogued on the 13th of April; when his excellency assured both houses of parliament, “that he had his Majesty’s commands to express his approbation of the wisdom, that had guided their proceedings during the present session, especially in the liberal indulgences they had afforded to their Roman Catholic brethren.” It thus appeared how much more liberally the British cabinet was disposed to the catholics, than the Irish government, whose sentiments Mr. Foster spoke. Several members complained of the influence of the British cabinet over the deliberations of the Irish senate. Such of the protestants, as wished the Irish to become a people, and to enjoy the freedom of the British constitution, scouted the cry of *protestant ascendancy*, adopting the axiom of Mr. Grattan, *that the Irish protestant would never be free, until the Irish catholic should cease to be a slave*. The catholic committee now felt the happy effects of securing, through their agent, the countenance and sup-

conduct he had voted a parliamentary censure. If other gentlemen thought the interests of the country were better supported by meanly fawning on a lord-lieutenant, than by a manly discharge of duty, let them pursue that mode. He never would.”—For more of this curious transaction, see Historical Review, vol. II. p. 367:



port of Mr. Burke, whose influence upon the British cabinet kept pace with his opposition to the French revolution. 1792.

Previous to any further application to the legislature the committee resolved to give to their country the utmost satisfaction upon all topics of their faith, connected, however remotely, with the principles of good order and government. For this purpose they published a declaration\* of their tenets, which was signed generally by the catholics of all descriptions through the kingdom, clergy and laity. It received the warm approbation of their supporters, and imposed silence on many of their opponents. Having thus endeavoured to clear the way by the removal of prejudice, they felt it incumbent upon them, in order to induce the two houses of parliament to afford relief to four millions of loyal and peaceable subjects, to satisfy them of the unequivocal sense of all the catholics of Ireland, which could only be fairly collected and fully expressed by delegation†; the committee therefore devised and circulated a plan, to ascertain by these means the sentiments of every individual of their body in Ireland. Catholic delegates.

Immediately on the appearance of this plan, a general outcry was raised against it. Sedition, tumult, conspiracy, and treason were echoed from county to county, from grand jury to grand jury. Some legis- Alarm taken by the grand juries.

\* This declaration is to be seen in the Appendix to Historical Review, No. LXXXVIII.

† This plan of delegation is also to be seen in the same Appendix, No. LXXXIX.

1792.

lators high in the confidence of their sovereign, and armed with the influence of station and office, presided at those meetings, and were indecently forward in arraigning measures, upon the merits of which in another place and in another function they were finally to determine. The exaggerated and alarming language of most of the grand juries imported, that the catholics of Ireland were on the eve of a general insurrection, ready to hurl the King from his throne, and tear the whole frame of the constitution to pieces. They vied with each other, which should most acrimoniously reprobate the inflammatory and dangerous publication. Some of the grand juries went the length of falsely asserting, that “the last session of parliament left the Roman catholics in no wise different from their protestant fellow-subjects, save only in the exercise of political power.” Some of the grand juries indignantly rejected the proposals made to them of resolutions injurious to their catholic brethren. Agents were publicly employed to tamper with every grand jury during the summer assizes. Nothing could tend more directly to foment disunion. Counter-resolutions, answers, and replies, addresses, and protestations, were circulated in the public papers \* from some grand jurymen, and from many different bodies

\* The columns of the daily newspapers were filled with charges, defences, and recriminations, which fatally proved the extensive influence and unwearied exertions of that part of protestant Ireland, which laboured to retain possession of the political power, which it had for centuries enjoyed. Specimens are to be seen in the Appendix to Historical Review, No. XC.

of catholics. Bold and severe publications appeared during the course of the summer, not only from individuals of the catholic body, but from the friends of their cause amongst the protestants. In order to bring into view all the penalties and disabilities, to which the body remained still subject, after the puny relief of the pompous bill of Sir Hercules Langrishe, Mr. Simon Butler published, by order of the Society of the United Irishmen at Belfast, a Digest of the Popery Laws. A formal vindication of the conduct and principles of the Roman Catholics of Ireland from the charges made against them by certain late grand juries, and other interested bodies in that country, was published by order of the committee\*.

1792:

\* In this work they sum up a recapitulation of the grievances by which they were still affected; and then conclude: "Such is the situation of three millions of good and faithful subjects in their native land! Excluded from every trust, power, or emolument of the state, civil or military; excluded from all the benefits of the constitution in all its parts; excluded from all corporate rights, and immunities; expelled from grand juries, restrained in petit juries; excluded from every direction, from every trust, from every incorporated society, from every establishment, occasional or fixed, instituted for public defence, public police, public morals, or public convenience; from the Bench, from the Bank, from the Exchange, from the University, from the College of Physicians, &c. Such is the state, which the corporation of Dublin have thought proper to assert, *differs in no respect from that of the protestants, save only in the exercise of political power*; and the host of grand juries consider as essential to the existence of the constitution, to the permanency of the connection with England, and the continuation of the throne in his Majesty's Royal House.



1792.

Cautious  
conduct of  
the catholic  
committee,  
and meet-  
ing of dele-  
gates.

The catholic committee became obnoxious to government in proportion to the sympathy and connection, which it was supposed existed between them and the Society of United Irishmen and other political clubs recently instituted for promoting civil freedom. It was natural for persons staggering under oppression cordially to grasp every hand, that held out relief\*. After the severe summer campaign, in which the catholics had to encounter so much obloquy from grand juries and other meetings of protestants, which were generally considered to have been packed and stimulated to their resolutions by the chancellor, the speaker of the house of commons, and other monopolizers of the civil power of the state; they found it necessary to remove fresh imputations against their civil conduct in applying for redress of grievances. They therefore procured and circulated the opinions of Mr. Simon Butler and Mr. Burston, both King's counsel, upon the legality of the circular letter signed Edward Byrne, and their other proceedings. Upon the strength of these opinions, the catholics proceeded to choose delegates for each district throughout the kingdom: the elections were quickly completed with-

\* Few or none of these political societies admitted catholic members. The whig club would not even permit the catholic question to be agitated amongst them. Had it been true, as it is fashionable with all the modern traducers of the Irish nation to assert, that there was as much treason in Dublin in 1792, as in the year 1799, and that these political societies were the hot-beds of rebellion, it evidently follows, that the catholics, who were excluded from them, were not the authors or fomenters of that rebellion.

out disturbance. The first meeting of the delegates was in Taylor's-hall, Back-lane\*, Dublin, on the 2d of December, 1792.

1792.

Other circumstances occurred in the course of this year, which tended to alarm government. The *national guard*, a new military body, was arrayed and disciplined in Dublin. They wore green uniforms, with buttons engraved with a harp, under a cap of liberty, instead of a crown. They affected to address each other by the appellation of citizen, in imitation of the French. They were in high favour with the populace, who cordially greeted them whenever they appeared on parade. To prevent a general insurrection the magistrates patrolled the streets with bodies of horse each night; rumours of conspiracies and assassinations were set afloat, which either never existed or were prevented by the timely interposition of government. Amongst other events of the year 1792, that tended to inflame the public mind, was the extension of Defenderism. Until that time the Defenders had not been seen beyond the counties of Armagh and Louth: now they suddenly appeared in bodies in the county of Meath, particularly in those parts which adjoin to Cavan. There, and in the adjacent parts, resided numerous tribes of presbyterians, called by the common people Scots. Between these, and the lower order of catholics, there had prevailed for many years an hereditary animosity; and it is hard to say on which side ignorance and

Irish national guard.

\* Whence in derision it was called the Back-lane parliament.

1792. religious prejudice preponderated. The Defenders were now the aggressors : their plan was to procure arms, and to deprive all those of arms, who were not engaged in their cause. They began with the presbyterians, and not in the most courteous manner. The Scots were joined by their brethren of Cavan. Their fury against the aggressors, who were mostly catholics, fell indiscriminately against all of that persuasion. Atrocities were committed on both sides. The Peep-of-Day Boys prevailed ; and they over-ran the country, pillaged, plundered, and burned, without requiring any mark of guilt but religion. Their proceedings, if not encouraged, were at least connived at, until the Earl of Bellamont restrained those of Cavan ; and their brethren of Meath, finding themselves abandoned by the great strength of their party, became quiet. The catholics, though openly and severely pointed at during these transactions, never complained of the outrages of the Scots, lest their complaints might seem to encourage the unprincipled wretches, who had disturbed the peace of the country. The Duke of Leinster, and many of the leading men of the opposition, became members of a newly-instituted society of the friends of the constitution, liberty, and peace\*. Several of the catholic committee sympa-

\* The spirit of this association appears from their declaration, which every member was obliged to subscribe ; and which passed whilst the Duke of Leinster was in the chair, on the 27th of December, 1792. " I solemnly promise and declare, that I will, by all lawful means, promote a radical and effectual reform in the representation of the people in parliament, including per-



thizing with their patriotic countrymen, were nearly as anxious for carrying that great national object, as their own emancipation. It was for a time doubted, whether they should address the parliament on the subject of reform, as catholics or as Irishmen.

1792.



In the course of the summer a conciliatory coalition had been effected between the committee and most of the sixty-four addressers. Convinced, that his Majesty's ministers in England were disposed to favor their pretensions, the catholics determined to act with internal union, firmness, and moderation. They framed a petition\* to the King, modestly representing their grievances. It was signed by Dr. Troy and Dr. Moylan, on behalf of themselves and the other Roman Catholic prelates and clergy of Ireland, and by the several delegates for the different districts which they respectively represented. They then chose five delegates to present it to his Majesty; namely, Sir Thomas French, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Keogh, Mr. Devereux, and Mr. Bellew. They went by short seas; and in passing through Belfast were waited upon by

Catholic  
petition  
presented  
to the  
throne.

sons of all religious persuasions; and that I will unceasingly pursue that object, until it shall have been unequivocally obtained: and, seriously apprehending the dangerous consequences of certain levelling tenets, and seditious principles, which have lately been disseminated, I do further declare, that I will resist all attempts to introduce any new form of government into this country, or in any manner to subvert or impair our constitution, consisting of king, lords and commons."

\* This petition is to be seen in the Appendix to Historical Review, No. XCV. with a list of the names of the delegates who signed it.

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the most respectable inhabitants. On their departure, the populace took their horses from their carriages and dragged them through the town amidst the liveliest shouts of joy and wishes for their success. On the 2d of January, 1793, the delegates were introduced by Mr. Dundas, and had the honor of presenting their petition to his Majesty, who was pleased most graciously to receive it. Without loss of time they returned to Dublin the welcome heralds of the benign countenance of the father of his people.

State of the  
nation at  
the opening  
of the ses-  
sion of  
1793.

Since Ireland had gained a constitution, no year was so pregnant with great events to that kingdom as the year 1793. The parliament met on the 10th of January, and when the lord-lieutenant, after lamenting the spirit of discontent, that had manifested itself in different parts of the kingdom, and having stated the ambitious and aggressive views of France, assured the parliament, that he had it in particular command from his Majesty, to recommend it to them to apply themselves to the consideration of such measures as might be most likely to strengthen and cement a general union of sentiment among all classes and descriptions of his Majesty's subjects, in support of the established constitution. With this view his Majesty trusted, that the situation of his Majesty's catholic subjects would engage their serious attention, and in the consideration of this subject, he relied on the wisdom and liberality of his parliament. Mr. John O'Neil, in supporting the address, congratulated his country, that the loyalty and good conduct of the people were rapidly removing the prejudices of the constituent body ;

1793.  
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and there could be no doubt, that his Majesty's recommendation would have infinite weight, not only with parliament, but with all ranks of persons. He doubted not, but that they would manifest by the strongest expressions their affectionate attachment to the King, who lived in the hearts of his people. But Mr. Grattan* observed, that the part of the address which related to his Majesty, was cold and impolitic. His interposition to heal their religious animosities was an act of distinguished wisdom: as such it should be marked; particularly at a time, when attempts had been made on the thrones of princes: at such a time he would mark to the catholics the King, as the deliverer of his people. He would distinguish him from his ministers. He would mark that monarch, who had rescued his people from the hands of those ministers, that how-

* In this debate Mr. Grattan spoke with more than his usual strength, "The persons, who opposed our liberty in 1782, were made our ministers. Afterwards the country forgave them: but they never forgave the country. They attempted to put down the constitution; but now they have put down the government: we told them so, we admonished them, we told them their driving would not do. Don't they remember how in 1790, we warned them. They said, we were severe. I am sure we were prophetic. In 1791, we repeated our admonition: told them, that a government of clerks would not do: that the government of the treasury would not do. That Ireland would not be long governed by the trade of parliament. We mentioned this, when Lord Buckingham ran away, and Lord Westmoreland succeeded to his office. We told them, that a nation, which had rescued her liberties from the giant of Old England, would not long bear to be trodden on by the violence of a few pigmies, whom the caprice of a court had appointed ministers."

1793. ever they might abhor their proceedings, they should if necessary, unite, to rally in support of the throne, keeping pure of leaning to any French politics; or any wishes in favor of that nation, now on the eve of a war with a country, with which they were by the crown, by the law, by interest, and by every political tie for ever to be connected. He then moved an amendment, which after a long debate he withdrew: but renewed it on the next day, when it was unanimously carried*.

Committee
upon par-
liamentary
reform.

The peculiarity of this session was the accession of government to many of the great questions, which they had before most pertinaciously resisted. Mr. Grattan so far succeeded upon the subject of reform, as to have procured a committee to enquire whether any, and what abuses had taken place in the state of the representation. This was considered by the gentlemen of the opposition a matter of triumph: it was an admission of the principle; it created confidence within, and afforded joy and satisfaction to the people without†.

* "We admire the wisdom, which at so critical a season has prompted your Majesty to come forward to take a leading part in healing the animosities of your people, on account of religion: we shall take into our immediate consideration the subject graciously recommended from the throne; and at a time when doctrines pernicious to freedom and dangerous to monarchical government are propagated in foreign countries, we shall not fail to impress your Majesty's catholic subjects with a sense of the singular and eternal obligation they owe to the throne, and to your Majesty's royal person and family."

† No stronger mark of the popular sympathy on this subject

1793.

Government countenances several popular acts.

On the 15th January, Mr. Secretary Hobart announced his intention of taking into consideration that part of the lord-lieutenant's speech, relating to the catholics. He also intimated his intention of easing the poor of the hearth-tax. Upon Mr. Grattan's expressing his intention to bring forward a libel bill, like that of Great Britain, Mr. Hobart avowed, that the attorney-general had it also in contemplation. Leave was given to Mr. Forbes to bring in a responsibility bill and a pension bill, and to Mr. Grattan to bring in a bill for the improvement of barren land. Thus passed one week in the Irish parliament without a symptom of opposition. In order to give time to digest the weight of important matter before the house they adjourned for some days.

On the 4th of February, 1793, Mr. Secretary Hobart presented to the house a petition of certain

Petition of the catholic bishops.

can be adduced, than the resolution of the catholic sub-committee upon their dissolution, after the act had been passed, which gave them their elective franchise. It most earnestly exhorted the catholics of Ireland to co-operate with their protestant brethren in all legal and constitutional means to carry into effect that great measure recognised by the wisdom of parliament, and so essential to the freedom, happiness, and prosperity of Ireland, a reform in the representation of the people in the commons house. As the catholics had by that act obtained a footing within the threshold of the constitution, they wished no longer to represent themselves to government as a distinct set of his Majesty's subjects: but as Irishmen cordially sympathizing with their countrymen in their efforts to secure the full benefit of a free constitution, to which they considered reform essential. Government rejoiced at the dissolution of this committee, but was highly offended at their offering to interfere with the civil concerns of the nation. (Vide Macneven's *pieces of Irish history*, 70. New-York, 1807.)

1793. Roman Catholic bishops of Ireland, and others, on behalf of themselves and their fellow-subjects of the same persuasion, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table*. Then Mr. Hobart said, he was aware, that many of those gentlemen whom he most respected, were not likely to concur in the measures he should propose; but in that point he trusted, that he differed from them for the real advantage of the country. He was also aware, that in the last session of parliament a petition for the very measure he should now propose had been rejected, and that he himself had voted for that rejection; but the sentiments of the country on that subject had materially altered since that time: the opinion of the country was not then ripe for such a measure. The circumstances of the present time would justify a material alteration in the sentiments of that house. The conduct of the Roman Catholics had proved, they were perfectly attached to the constitution; and at that particular period, every man who was attached to the constitution should receive encouragement. He then went through the several objects of the intended bill, reasoning upon each†. He

* 15 Com. Jour. p. 141. The petition is to be seen in *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 408.

† When Mr. Hobart touched upon the army and navy, he expressly said, (he then spoke as the minister of the crown) that it was in the contemplation of the government of England to admit Roman Catholics to bear commissions in these departments of the state: and that in due time measures for the same purpose would be proposed there, when a communication with the English government should have been had upon that point. This pledge to the public has been never redeemed. The opening of the British

1793.

assured the house of his Majesty's paternal anxiety to meet the wishes of his Irish people. He trusted therefore, that he acted for the good of the country, by forwarding such measures, as would best carry into effect his Majesty's gracious recommendation to parliament. In this spirit had government come to the resolution of easing the lower classes by repealing the hearth-tax, and manifesting a disposition to accede to every measure, that tended to promote the happiness of the kingdom. He then moved for leave to bring in a bill for the further relief of his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion. The motion was seconded by Sir Hercules Langrishe: and most vehemently opposed by Dr. Duigenan, who in a long speech collected together whatever the acrimonious bigotry of the last two centuries had heaped together against the catholics, and retailed it with enthusiastic bitterness. He and Mr. Ogle were the only two upon the division, who opposed the bringing in of the bill. Lord Hillsborough obtained leave to bring in a bill to establish a militia, nearly on the same plan as that of England. The whole number of men he proposed to be 16,000, upon a rough estimate of 500 for each county. Mr. Grattan never lost an opportunity of bringing the subject of reform before parliament. The 9th of February, 1793, proved a considerable check upon the confidence, which the opposition had, during the first week of the session, placed in the sincerity

army and navy to his Majesty's catholic subjects never has been brought forward, but has been constantly opposed by the very men, who then held it out as a national pledge.

1793:

of administration. When, according to order, the house had resolved itself into a committee to enquire into the state of the representation of the people in parliament, * Mr. Grattan made a most impressive speech; observing, with his peculiar energy, that in 1782, the question was, Whether Ireland should be governed by the parliament of another country: the present was, Whether she should enjoy a parliament of her own. He followed up his speech with three general self-evident resolutions, which the chancellor of the exchequer got rid of by urging the danger of teaching the public to despise the present system before a better was provided. The ultimate division upon reform was 137 against 48. Thenceforth stood revived the old system of opposition, and the hope of coalition in that great national question vanished.

Catholic
bill passes
the com-
mons.

On the next day Mr. Hobart informed the house, that he was directed by his excellency to deliver to them a message, importing that the persons exercising the powers of government in France, had without previous notice directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of his majesty's subjects, and calling upon their co-operation in the cause. After Mr. Secretary had delivered this message, and the house had addressed the lord-lieutenant for his gracious communication, Mr. Hobart presented the catholic bill, which passed without a division. On the 22d of February, it was read a second time, and produced a warm

1793.

debate. The question was carried in the affirmative, against only one negative: and the bill was committed for the Monday following with three negatives. Of all supporters of catholic emancipation, Mr. Grattan* was the most consistent, zealous, and persevering. His sentiments swayed many opinions in the nation; they also created discontent and opposition in another part of the community. He wished the bill under their consideration had gone further. He could wish, that it had given the Roman Catholics the privileges of other dissenters. Sure, he was, that was the only sound policy. He thought however the bill deserved thanks, because it contained much, and also because it led to much more; but the mover would have discovered more sense, if he had then given to the catholics the whole, and had settled with them for ever. When the bill was in the committee, Mr. George Knox moved, that the committee might be empowered to receive a clause to admit catholics to sit and vote in the house of commons. Major Doyle seconded the motion, which was strongly supported by Mr. Daly, Col. Hutchinson, Mr. M. Smith, Mr. John O'Neile, Mr. Hardy, and other gentlemen liberally

* Mr. Grattan not only persuaded by eloquence, but instructed by historical information. He illustrated the subject by his statement of the Irish brigade in the service of France, the number of the northern dissenters fighting against England in America, and the services of real Irishmen in the navy and army of Great Britain, even in breach of the law. He emphatically observed, that if they wished never to meet Irishmen in arms in other countries, they ought to give them a better condition at home. *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 410.

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Catholic
bill passes
the lords.

disposed to their catholic countrymen; it was however rejected upon a division by 163 against 69.

When the catholic bill had passed its second reading in the lords, the Bishop of Killala * expressed his ready and most cheerful assent to a bill for the relief of his long oppressed and loyal catholic brethren. It was no part of protestantism to persecute catholics: and without justice to the catholic, there could be no security for the protestant establishment; as a friend, therefore, to the permanency of that establishment, to the prosperity of the country, and the justice due to his catholic brethren, he should cheerfully vote for the committal. Many lords delivered their sentiments upon this important subject. None so vehemently as the Archbishop of Cashell, and the lord-chancellor. His lordship concluded a bitter invective against the catholics, with a reflection, which gives strong room to believe, that the committee of the lords received that tint of crimination, which is so visible in their report, from his lordship's influence and suggestions†. He mentioned the powers assumed by the popish convention of levying taxes upon their community for defraying the expenses of their claims and proceedings, which, were they fair, just, and open, required no such support. In further innovation he foresaw

* Dr. Law, a brother of Lord Ellenborough.

† On the other hand Lord Portarlington, who was one of that committee, observed, that if he had not been fully convinced, from the evidence there adduced, that the catholic body had no concern in the disturbances of the defenders, he should not so cheerfully vote for the committal of the bill.

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a total separation from England, or an union with her: each to be equally dreaded. In the debate, which took place upon the clause, enabling catholics to accept military employments, Lord Farnham argued, that until a similar law should have passed in England, catholic officers could not attend their regiments, if ordered on duty into that kingdom. His lordship was, therefore, for amending the clause, by wording it so, that a Roman Catholic should not be eligible to a military commission in Ireland, until the principle were adopted by a similar law of England, which would render the catholic eligible to military service in any part of the British empire, wherever exigency might call him. The chancellor opposed the principle of that amendment. The clause merely went to enable catholics to accept a military employment; but it could not be supposed his Majesty would appoint a man to such a post, until the laws of the empire should fully qualify him to act in every part of it. It was more than probable, a similar law to this would be adopted in England, before the lapse of two months, and on this ground the amendment would be wholly unnecessary. The Duke of Leinster opposed the amendment as unnecessary, and wished to have the loyalty and prowess of the Irish catholic attached to the service of his country. Lord Bellamont supported the amendment, as tending to accelerate a law in England, similar to the present. Upon those grounds the amendment was withdrawn*, and the bill passed.

* Fourteen years have elapsed since Lord Clare's assumption of a similar law being passed in England. None such has yet passed.

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Strong mea-
sures of go-
vernment :
Gunpowder
and conven-
tion bill.

Notwithstanding government had consented to several of the popular measures being brought forward, yet they carried with a high hand two very strong measures : the gunpowder bill*, and the convention bill.

The general motive, which induced the minister to propose the convention bill† was to prevent the prevalence of the successful example of the catholic convention. The particular motive was to prevent the intended national convention at Athlone. Mr. Grattan objected, that it was a false declaration of law, and deprived the subject of his constitutional right of petitioning against grievances, by rendering the previous measure of consultation and deliberation criminal : and because the words and tendency of the bill went re-

The Grenville administration was sacrificed to their attempt to redeem this pledge of the British government.

* 33 Geo. I. c. 2. Mr. Grattan thus spoke of this bill : " On the same plan of unconstitutional and scandalous influence did they sell the peerage to procure seats in the commons for the dependency and the dishonour of both houses of parliament : and having from this conduct, aggravated by a most unseemly and unbecoming intemperance of manner and incontinence of language, lost the confidence of the country, and greatly agitated the same, they then proceeded to a system of coercion, to support their plans of corruption, and to dragoon the people, as they had bought the parliament. They began that system by an act, which tended, in a qualified manner, to disarm his Majesty's subjects, under certain regulations, named a gunpowder bill, and had principally in view to put down the Irish volunteers."

† 33 Geo. III. c. 29. An Act to prevent the Election or Appointment of unlawful Assemblies, under pretence of preparing or presenting public Petitions or other Addresses to his Majesty or the Parliament.

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prospectively to declare, that all conventions and delegations, that had existed in that kingdom, were illegal. He objected not to the enacting part, which, had it been properly framed, would have operated prospectively by way of inhibition against future conventions and delegations*. All the popular bills urged by the opposition since the last parliament were passed, except parliamentary reform. It is hardly credible, that the people, who had been so long crying out for the reform of parliament against the aristocracy and the government, should not urge it when both gave it up†. This important session was put an end to on the 16th of August, when his excellency opened his speech

* When this bill was in committee, Mr. Grattan observed, (13 Parl. Debates, p. 546), " This bill is said to be an expedient to restore peace; why, then, is it a reflection? Why do the preamble and the declaration pronounce every man, who has been a delegate, all the volunteers, the delegates at Dunganon, the delegates of the convention, the committee of the lawyers corps, and the corps, that appointed that committee; the committee of the catholics, their late convention, and all the catholics, who appointed that convention; that is, the whole catholic body, offenders; men guilty of an unlawful assembly, and at this moment liable to be prosecuted? For so much has the bill in object, not the peace of the country, but reflections on great bodies, and the gratification of spleen at the expense of the constitution, by voting false doctrine into law, and the brightest passages of your history into unlawful assemblies."

† They did just with regard to reform, what they had formerly done with regard to the absentee tax. " A mistress, (said Mr. Flood), which the people of Ireland sought with a lover's appetite, was, when brought to their embraces, repudiated with a lover's inconstancy."

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from the throne with these words: "The wisdom and liberality, with which you attended to his Majesty's recommendation in favour of his Roman Catholic subjects, are highly pleasing to the King." Although several excellent laws were passed in the year 1793, yet the administration did not gain popularity by them. The leading measure of grace, which affected the great bulk of the people, was attributed to the personal interference of the sovereign over the heads and against the wishes of those, who had the preceding year rejected their application for less favour with indignation and insult. The passing of the act so emphatically calculated to destroy the odious distinctions between Irishmen of different religious persuasions, altered the laws, but crushed not the spirit, which kept them up. Great difficulties at first prevailed in raising the different regiments of militia; for although catholics were rendered capable of serving in them, no catholic officers were appointed. This marked exclusion in teeth of the act, diffused general diffidence, and it was found necessary to appoint several catholic officers, before the militia corps could be completed*. The legislative concessions made to the catholics of Ireland, in submission to the royal recommendation, were strongly counteracted by the exclusive distinc-

* A still stronger instance of predominant bigotry occurred at the quarterly meeting of the guild of merchants in Dublin; when the application of thirty Roman catholic merchants to be admitted into the guild was rejected upon the ballot, by 67 against 63: But it was remarkable, that of those 67, 42 were pensioners, placemen, or custom-house officers.

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tions publicly kept up in corporations, and by anonymous charges and slanders circulated against them. The catholics met these anonymous attacks, with fresh resolutions and avowals of their loyalty and affection to the King and constitution*. The growth and progress of defenderism were most unwarrantably charged on the entire body of catholics. The murder of the Reverend Mr. Butler, a respectable magistrate, and chaplain to the Bishop of Meath, and a rising in the neighbourhood of Athboy, which was dispersed in the course of the day, were attempted to be fixed upon them, and were most iniquitously converted into the grounds of falsely charging and imprisoning Mr. Fay and some other highly respectable gentlemen of the catholic persuasion, who were tried and acquitted, notwithstanding the false testimony of one Lynch and other wretches, raked out of gaols, and suborned to swear away their lives†. In order to counteract these attempts to calumniate and criminate the body of the catholics, by identifying the cause of Roman catholics, united Irishmen, defenders, French levellers, and sworn enemies to the constitution, the catholic bishops presented an address to his excellency in December, 1793, to be transmitted to his Majesty, expressive of their unshaken loyalty and grateful affection to his Majesty's person and government. And in February, 1794, they presented a very impressive me-

* The resolutions of the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Wexford, are given in the *Historical Review*, p. 436.

† These iniquitous transactions are rather fully narrated in my *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 438, &c.

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memorial to the Earl of Westmoreland, to obtain his Majesty's license to found and endow seminaries for the education of their clergy within their native kingdom*.

Trial of Mr.
Hamilton
Rowan.

The confident boldness, with which the popular societies had lately expressed their political sentiments, induced government to adopt a system of strong measures. An information was filed against Mr. A. Hamilton Rowan for distributing † a seditious libel. After a trial of about ten hours, he was found guilty. A motion for a new trial was argued for six days, and at last discharged. He was sentenced to pay a fine of 500*l.* to be imprisoned for two years, and to find security for his good behaviour for seven years, himself in 2000*l.* and two sureties in 1000*l.* each. The verdict and judgment gave great dissatisfaction to the

* These addresses are to be seen in my *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 443. This address of the prelates to the lord-lieutenant was not relished by the general body of the laity. It appeared too adulatory to the system of government: it put an end to a plan of education, which had been for some time in negotiation between the clergy and laity; and thenceforth checked the confidence, that had latterly subsisted between them. The gentlemen (Dr. Ryan, Dr. Macneven, and Mr. Lyons), who had negotiated with the prelates, were desired to desist from their labours, as an arrangement had taken place for a plan of catholic education to be conducted solely by the bishops, under the auspices of government and the sanction of parliament. (*Pieces of Irish History*, p. 74).

† This gentleman was universally beloved and respected by all who knew him. He was secretary to the Society of United Irishmen at Dublin. Their Address to the Volunteers of Ireland, (which may be seen in my *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 448), signed by Mr. Hamilton Rowan, was the libel complained of.

popular party. - They loudly complained of the judge and jury acting under court influence. 1794.

The parliament was convened on the 21st of January; and Mr. Ponsonby's reform bill, which was lost upon a division of 142 against 44, was the only object of interest brought before them. The 25th of March put an end to that j-june session. The gentlemen of the opposition, and particularly Mr. Grattan, gave great offence to the United Irishmen, by reprobating in debate the system of universal suffrage and annual parliaments. Ten days after the debate they published an address, severely reflecting upon the falling off of Mr. Grattan, and the minority in parliament.

Parliament
convened
and pro-
rogued.

Popular discontent and turbulence increased throughout the kingdom. Defenderism spread rapidly; the Right Boys gained confidence, and the United Irishmen assumed a tone of political language, that shocked even some steady supporters of constitutional freedom, and gave too plausible a handle to their enemies to fasten upon them intentions and views, which that society then had not. The defenders were of the lowest orders of society; enemies of course to all that possessed property and character. In Longford, the nobility, clergy, and freeholders obtained permission from the viceroy to levy money by subscription for raising and maintaining a body of horse for their defence. Meetings and resolutions for the like purpose became frequent in other parts. Mr. Hamilton Rowan's escape out of prison on the 1st of May, 1794, made a deep, though very opposite impression

Troubled
state of the
country.

1794.

upon different parts of the nation. One thousand pounds reward was offered for apprehending him. About the same time, the Reverend Mr Jackson*, a protestant clergyman, was committed to Newgate on a charge of high treason. The rejection of the question of reform tended powerfully to increase the popular discontent. The people at large were all for reform: some for universal suffrage, most for a temperate improvement of the state of popular representation. The two great objects of political attention were parliamentary reform and catholic emancipation. Most persons out of parliament were common advocates for both, each tending to promote and improve the other.

Difference
between the
first and last
United
Irishmen.

About this time the term or title of *United Irishmen* became peculiarly obnoxious. It ought not, however, to be confounded, as it often is, with the guilt of the latter rebellious members of the Irish union. They were separate and distinct societies: their principles, objects, and engagements were different. The one was extinct, before the other existed. The leading traits of the latter were separation from Great Britain and republicanism. And up to this time, neither of those objects had been a subject of discussion, debate, or even conversation in the first society. Their views and actions were simply commensurate with their test. The very spirit and terms of their

* This gentleman had a delegation from France to enquire into and report the spirit and resources of the nation to resist invasion. He confided his secret to Mr. Cockayne, his attorney, who accompanied him to Ireland, and informed against him.

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union offended the friends of protestant ascendancy and unequal representation. They never presumed an attempt beyond parliamentary reform.


So turbulent was the state of the country, that the British cabinet found it necessary to remove the Earl of Westmoreland from the government, and to abandon the system of coercion. The extraordinary accession of a very large part of the Rockingham party* to the minister, in July, 1794, was an event, which Mr. Ponsonby said in the Irish house of commons† would never have taken place, had not the Duke of Portland received ample authority to reform the abuses, which existed in the Irish government. ‡ When the Duke and his friends were enticed into the coalition with Mr. Pitt, it had been made a previous condition, that the entire management of Ireland should be committed to his grace. And so far did Mr. Pitt appear sincere in these terms, that, on the very day, on which the Duke of Portland kissed hands, which was in July, 1794, he declared the determination of the British cabinet, to bring forward the question of catholic emancipation in the next session of parliament. The lieutenancy was soon after pressed upon Lord Fitzwilliam by the Duke of Portland, who declined going thither in person, with directions for making such arrangements, as would enable him to restore tranquillity and order to the country, and re-

Intended
recal of
Lord West-
moreland.

* The particulars of this negociation, and its consequent changes, are to be seen at large in my historical Review, p. 465, &c.

† 15 Parl. Deb. p. 184.

‡ Lord Fitzwilliam's letter to Lord Carlisle.

1794.  concile the people to its government. Mr. Pitt, in breaking up the Rockingham party, sought more to weaken his opponents, than to strengthen administration by the accession of character and talent. Notwithstanding these arrangements with his new associates, Mr. Pitt assured Lord Westmoreland, in August, that he should not be removed. Finding it, however, impracticable to retain him in that situation, he actually fixed upon Lord Camden, in the course of the autumn, as his successor. These circumstances demonstrate, that Lord Fitzwilliam and Ireland were made the sport of cabinet intrigue. That his lordship was sent to take possession of a government, which he was not intended to continue in; that he was permitted to raise expectations in the Irish nation, which were not to be realized; and that he was encouraged to bring forward, as a measure of government, what it had been preconcerted should be opposed by its whole force.

System of
duplicity in
Mr. Pitt.

The incidents of this period were so important to the interests of Ireland, that she still has to lament their baleful consequences. Every instance of ministerial duplicity entails more misery upon posterity, than upon the existing generation. Mr. Pitt, knowing the real views and motives of his new friends, in insisting upon the government of Ireland, to be the complete emancipation of that enthralled country, the necessity of which his own wisdom pointed out, assured them, that his fullest convictions kept pace with their plans for the welfare of that country. It was generally believed in Ireland, not only by the catholics,

1794.

who had now coalesced into a complete union amongst themselves, but by the old political friends of the Duke of Portland, that a full and complete emancipation was intended; and his grace's opinions at that time coincided with those of his Irish friends. In order to the settlement of the new arrangements, Mr. Ponsonby and Mr. Grattan were sent for to England, and frequently consulted by Mr. Pitt*. The particular marshalling of the treasury bench was settled by Sir John Parnell and Mr. Pitt.

By the effects of the late convention bill, the catholics were prevented from meeting by delegation. They frequently, however, assembled in the course of the summer, for the purpose of forwarding the general plan, in which they were unanimous, of total emancipation, and equalization with their protestant fellow subjects. These meetings were necessarily more numerous, than they would have been by delegation, and gave great umbrage to the Irish government. Their confidence had arisen to conviction, that what had in the preceding session been lost by a vast majority,

Confidence
of the Ca-
tholics.

* Mr. Grattan has said, (answer to Lord Clare, 24), "In the session of 1794, the catholic subject was not mentioned; but in summer, on a change being made in the British cabinet, being informed by some of the learned persons therein, that the administration of the Irish department was to belong to them, and that they sent for us to adopt our measures, I stated the catholic emancipation to be one of them." This pointedly contradicts the notorious falsehood of Lord Clare's assertion, that the catholics "would have continued contented and quiet, if they had not been brought forward as an engine of faction, on a change in the Irish government, 1795." (Cl. Sp. 65.)

1794. would, when backed by government, be carried with unanimity. The catholics of Dublin took the lead, and by unanimous assent resolved to commit their cause to the talents, zeal, and long-tried sincerity of Mr. Grattan: and resolutions to that effect were accordingly published *. Their example was followed by most districts in the nation.

Cabinet intrigues
against
Lord Fitz-
william.

The latter end of the year 1794 was a busy scene of intrigue. Mr. Pitt had several objects in consenting to the new arrangements: first, to flatter, then degrade his proselytes. He knew the confidence, which the Irish would place in the new administration, and the readiness, with which they would vote the extraordinary supplies (1,700,000*l.*) for carrying on a war, to which his new colleagues were more sanguinely addicted than himself. Mr. Beresford, who foresaw that in the change of the Irish government, a blow was aimed at the power and authority, which he had exercised successively over every viceroy, from Lord Townshend to Lord Westmoreland, transported himself to England, and there, both with his majesty and Mr. Pitt, so effectually urged the merits of himself and family, as to have fully preconcerted his own continuance in office, the miscarriage of the catholic question, and the immediate recal of the new lord lieutenant, when the supplies should have been voted. With these assurances, he returned to Ireland, where he was most actively employed, in conjunction with Lord Fitzgibbon and Mr. Foster, in preparing to

* These resolutions are to be seen Hist. Rev. vol. II. p. 469.

1794.
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counteract all the plans intended by the new administration, for the benefit of that country. Such was the reception, which Mr. Pitt had insidiously prepared for Lord Fitzwilliam, when he was deputed to the government of Ireland. That Lord Fitzwilliam went over with a plenitude of power from the British cabinet to carry the measure of catholic emancipation, stands roundly asserted by that nobleman himself, and by Lord Milton, Mr. Ponsonby, and Mr. Grattan. It was contradicted by Lord Westmoreland*, who said, in the British house of peers, that Mr. Pitt had assured him, "that Earl Fitzwilliam had no authority whatever from ministers in this country, for taking the steps he did on the catholic question: they were taken not only without their authority, but with their positive disapprobation." Lord Fitzwilliam took possession of his government on the 4th of January, 1795.

* 41 Par. Deb. p. 352.

CHAPTER VI.

Administration of Earl Fitzwilliam.

1795

Lord Fitz-
william as-
sumes the
govern-
ment

ALTHOUGH Lord Fitzwilliam had coalesced with Mr. Pitt on the necessity of the war with France, and the general call to make head against the pruriency of democracy, he still retained all those valuable principles, and estimable qualities, which so peculiarly signalized his late uncle, the Marquis of Rockingham, and the principal supporters of his party. Alike honourable and inflexible in his public and private dealings, he was a stranger to that system of pliancy and insincerity, which Mr. Pitt required of his creatures and colleagues. He played not the intriguing courtier, but the honest minister, performing upon public principles his public duty, equally regardless of the favour of the court and people. He had no sooner arrived at his seat of government, than he put his hand earnestly to the work, insensible of the preconcerted opposition of Mr. Pitt to the whole of his system. Yet had not the Duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt concurred with his lordship in the policy and necessity of relieving the catholics from every remaining disqualification, he tells us*, he never would have undertaken the government. Before his departure from England,

* Letter to Lord Carlisle.

1795.

it had been resolved, that if the catholics should appear determined to stir the business, and bring it before parliament, he was to give it a handsome support on the part of government. Three days after his landing, he transmitted the result of his observations to the British cabinet: and during the first fortnight not a negative idea was communicated to him from England.

The first public acts of Lord Fitzwilliam's government, were some dismissals from offices, which created general apprehensions through all the departments of the castle*. He made proposals to the British ministers for the removal of the attorney and solicitor general, upon large provisions: it having been previously arranged with Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Portland, that they were to be succeeded by Messrs. Ponsoby and Curran. He also removed Mr. Beresford, whom he found filling a situation greater than that of the lord-lieutenant; sensible that any connection with a person under universal heavy suspicions, would be subjecting his government to all the opprobrium and unpopularity of Mr. Beresford's mal-administration; nor would he cloud the dawn of his administration, by leaving in such power and authority, so much imputed malversation; though in point of income, he left

Dismissals
by Lord
Fitzwilliam.

* One of these was Mr. Cooke, of whom Lord Fitzwilliam thus writes to Lord Carlisle. "Mr. Cooke indeed, whose tone and style render his approach to a superior not to be supported, rejects my proposals in his favour, and thinks a retreat upon 1200*l.* a year an inadequate recompence for the magnitude and importance of his services."

1795.



him as well as he had ever been. Mr. Béresford, his family and friends then were in the full enjoyment of more emolument, than ever had been accumulated in that country upon any one family.

Catholic
addresses to
Lord Fitz-
william

The address of the catholics of Dublin was presented to his excellency on the 7th of January*, and was followed up by numerous others; they were all of one tendency, and received similar answers. It was truly observed, that the catholics' gratitude for the late concessions, appeared less prominent in their addresses, than their confidence and expectation of their extension.

Lord Fitz-
william
meets the
Parliament.

On the 22d of January, 1795, Earl Fitzwilliam met the parliament, and in his speech alluded to the eventful situation of the British empire, and called upon them to lend their aid to its support in those extraordinary circumstances. Immediately after the speech had been read, Mr. Grattan moved the address†, which he supported by a brilliant speech, which explicitly pledged the principles of the new lieutenant's government to the Irish nation. Mr. Du-

* Lord Clare gave a most malicious and distorted representation of the loyal act of a respectable body of subjects, evidently calculated to throw a suspicion of treason upon the catholic body. (*Lord Clare's speech*, p. 66.) "An address to Lord Fitzwilliam in the name of their body was voted, and at the front of the committee, appointed to greet the king's representative under the auspices of his self-avowed minister, stand the names of Dr. William James M'Neven, Mr. John Sweetman, and Mr. Richard M'Cormick, all of them self-convicted traitors."

† As this gentleman had not accepted of any place, Lord Clare called him the self-avowed minister of Lord Fitzwilliam.

1795.


query alone reprobated the war with pointed severity. The motion for the address was carried without a division; as was also the motion of Mr. Conolly for an address* to the lord lieutenant. The unanimity of the whole catholic body, for an immediate application to parliament, for the unqualified repeal of the whole penal code was too formidable to be damped or disappointed. Lord Fitzwilliam judged, it could not be postponed without danger. Mr. Grattan, who commanded the confidence of the catholics, and of the lord lieutenant, on the 24th of January, presented a petition of the catholics of the city of Dublin, to be restored to the full enjoyment of the constitution, by a repeal of all the penal laws still affecting the catholics of Ireland. It was ordered to lie on the table, which was soon laden with similar petitions from every distinct body of catholics throughout the realm. On the 12th of February, 1795, Mr. Grattan obtained leave to bring in the bill, which was opposed only by Dr. Duigenan, Mr. Ogle, and Colonel Blaquiere†.

* The speeches of Lord Fitzwilliam and Mr. Grattan, and the different addresses, are to be seen in my *Hist. Rev.* Vol. II. p. 478, &c.

† Letter to Lord Carlisle. It rarely happens, that such mysterious and dark transactions, as this government opposition to the open and avowed measures of the king's ostensible ministers are fairly brought to light. The Irish nation and the public are highly indebted to the candour and independence of this distinguished nobleman, for having disclosed the truth in his invaluable letter to Lord Carlisle. It defies ravel, doubt, and contradiction, and must hand down the noble and patriotic writer to the love and veneration of the latest posterity.

1795. As there appeared a rising impatience among the catholics, after the delivery of their petitions, his excellency apprehended, that the measure might be transferred from the hands of Mr. Grattan to those of some other, over whom he might have no controul; and he considered, that delay would be attended with a certainty of the most alarming and fatal consequences.

British minister opposes the measures of the viceroy.

On the 14th of February, Lord Milton communicated to the house his majesty's gracious answer to their address, which pointedly noticed, that the favourable sentiments they had expressed of Lord Fitzwilliam were pleasing to his majesty, as they confirmed those impressions, which recommended him to his majesty's choice for the government of Ireland. This confirmation of the royal choice of the viceroy, was communicated to the house of commons on the very day, which brought tidings, that the British minister was adverse to the important measure, which the lord lieutenant was thus publicly pursuing. The extraordinary joy of the catholics on the occasion of leave to bring in their bill, was suddenly damped by this inexplicable intelligence. Earl Fitzwilliam had been permitted to quit England with a plenitude of discretion over the catholic question, and had acted for above a month upon it in Ireland without a suggestion of difference of opinion in the British cabinet from him upon the subject. On the 9th of February, Mr. Pitt wrote to Lord Fitzwilliam, to expostulate on the dismissal of Mr. Beresford; and also on the nego-

1795.

ciation with Messrs. Wolfe and Toler*. That formed the whole matter of his letter, and to that alone he confined his remonstrances: so far was he from finding any fault with the measures hitherto pursued, which he was thoroughly apprized of, that he concluded his letter by apologizing *for interrupting his attention from the many important considerations of a different nature, to which all their minds ought to be directed.* This evident allusion to the question of catholic emancipation, ascertains the real cause of Mr. Pitt's determination to recal Lord Fitzwilliam; and justifies his lordship's assertion, that the catholic question entered for nothing into the real cause of his recal, but that it was solely owing to the dismissal of Mr. Beresford. On the 17th of February, Mr. Graydon moved for a committee to inquire into the expenditures of the revenue for twenty years past, the number of additional officers appointed in each year, with the names of the persons, and salary annexed to each office. The motion was carried against the single negative of Colonel Blaquiere. The resolutions of the British cabinet were not instantly followed up by the recal of the viceroy. The determination was known to many, though publicly avowed by none.

Sir Lawrence Parsons, who with Mr. Duquerry had stood alone in opposition to the government upon the question of war*, noticed the prevailing rumour, that

The two
opponents
of Lord
Fitzwilliam
most hurt
at his recal.

* The attorney and solicitor general; afterwards Lord Kilwarren and Lord Norbury.

1795.

their viceroy was about to be recalled. If it arose from any new restriction on his wishes to realize the professions of his administration, or to fill his high station with honour, his resignation reflected the highest lustre on the dignity of his nature and the purity of his principles ; but as he still hoped measures had not proceeded to that length, which must deprive the country, in so critical a juncture, of the auspices of a nobleman, who came the harbinger and the hostage of her political salvation, he moved for an address to his excellency to implore his continuance amongst them. Mr. Duquerry seconded the motion. He and the honourable baronet had differed from gentlemen on the other side of the house respecting the ruinous war ; but if, after voting the enormous supply of 1,700,000*l.* to save, if possible, the empire from destruction, they were to be deprived of the administration of that nobleman, to whom the people looked up with confidence, he feared the great and salutary measures of reform, retrenchment, and responsibility would vanish, and the catholics of Ireland, instead of the accomplishment of their hopes, would have the gate of the castle slapped in their faces, and be refused the blessings of the constitution. He severely animadverted upon Mr. Pitt's conduct, who, not satisfied with having involved the empire in a disastrous war, intended to complete the mischief, by risking the internal peace of Ireland, making the friends of that country the dupes of his fraud and artifice, in order to swindle the nation out of 1,700,000*l.* to support the war, on the faith of measures, which he intended should be refused. On

the 2d of March, Sir Lawrence Parsons moved for a three months' money bill, which Mr. Conolly proposed to compromise, and the house divided, 24 for and 146 against Sir Lawrence Parsons' motion. Mr Conolly then proposed three resolutions. " 1. That his excellency Earl Fitzwilliam had, by his conduct since his arrival in that kingdom, merited the thanks of that house and the confidence of the people. 2. That to prorogue the parliament before the grievances, of which the people complained, were redressed, would be highly inexpedient. 3. That the foregoing resolutions be laid before his majesty." The first of these resolutions was carried unanimously; the two other, at the instance of Lord Milton and Mr. Grattan*, were withdrawn. On the 10th of March, the house adjourned to the 24th, when the money bills were carried up to the lords, and the house then further adjourned to the 13th of April, in order to allow time for the new arrangements.

The report of Earl Fitzwilliam's intended removal was no sooner credited, than an universal despondency, in some instances bordering on desperation, seized the nation. Meetings were formed to convey to their beloved governor, their high sense of his virtue and patriotism, and their indignation at his and their country's enemies. The spirit of discontent was not confined to the catholics. The dissenters, and as many of the protestants of the establishment, as had not an interest in that monopoly of power, which Lord

1795.
Report of
Lord Fitz-
william's
removal,
and its ef-
fects.

* 15 Parl. Deb. p. 142.

1795. Fitzwilliam had so openly attacked and so fearfully alarmed, felt the irresistible effect. All good Irishmen beheld with sorrow and indignation the reconciliation of all parties, interests, and religions defeated, the cup of national union dashed from their eager lips, and the spirit of discord let loose upon the kingdom with an enlarged commission to enflame, aggravate, and destroy. The catholics of Dublin took the lead*, and deputed three of their body to present a petition to the king at the levee, praying on behalf of their body, that his majesty would be graciously pleased to continue his excellency in the government of Ireland. On the 5th of March, the Duke of Leinster, in the house of lords, rose at a late hour, and, after prefacing what he was about to propose with a warm and affectionate eulogy upon the character of Lord Fitzwilliam, moved the following resolution, "that his excellency Earl Fitzwilliam since his arrival in that kingdom, had, by his public conduct, merited the thanks of that house, and the confidence of the country." Lord Dillon opposed the motion: upon which a warm debate ensued; but with a slight amendment, the resolution passed. The ferment in the country was greatly increased by the rumours then afloat concerning the extraordinary movements in the cabinets of both kingdoms.

Catholics' address to Mr. Grattan.

On the 27th of February, 1795, the catholics of Dublin appointed two gentlemen of their body to pre-

* The resolutions of this meeting are given in my *Hist. Rev.* vol. II. p. 503.

1795.

sent an address to Mr. Grattan, which fully spoke their feelings and sentiments of the political posture of affairs: to which they received an immediate answer, which has been more censured by the enemies, and applauded by the friends of that gentleman, than any thing, that ever came from his mouth*.

* Mr. Grattan's reply to that address is too pointed and appropriate to existing circumstances not to submit parts of it to the reader. "In supporting you, I support the protestant: we have but one interest and one honour; and whoever gives privileges to you, gives vigour to all. The protestant already begins to perceive it. A late attack rallied the scattered spirits of the country from the folly of religious schism to the recollection of national honour; and a nation's feuds are lost in a nation's resentment. Your emancipation will pass, rely on it; your emancipation must pass: it may be death to one viceroy; it will be the peace-offering of another; and the laurel may be torn from the dead brow of one governor, to be craftily converted into the olive of his successor.

"Let me advise you by no means to postpone the consideration of your fortunes till after the war: rather let Britain receive the benefits of your zeal during the exigency which demands it; and you yourselves, while you are fighting to preserve the blessings of a constitution, have really and *bona fide* those blessings.

"My wish is, that you may be free now: there is no other policy, which is not low and little: let us at once instantly embrace and greatly emancipate.

"On this principle I mean to introduce your bill, with your permission, immediately after the recess.

"His excellency, Lord Fitzwilliam, may boast that he offered to the empire the affections of millions, a better aid to the war than his enemies can furnish, who have forfeited those affections, and put themselves in their place.

"So decidedly have the measures of Ireland served the empire, that those, who were concerned in them, might appeal from the cabals of the British cabinet to the sense of the British nation: I

1793

Lord Fitz-
william
leaves Ire-
land.

Addresses and resolutions were daily multiplied from different bodies of catholics, who not content with having addressed his Majesty, his viceregent, and parliament, now addressed particular characters of extraordinary influence or supposed power in the country, as the last resort in their despondency; calling upon their exertions to prevent the threatened catastrophe. All was fruitless. On the 25th of

know of no cause afforded for the displeasure of the British cabinet; but if services done to Ireland are crimes, which cannot be atoned for by exertions for the empire, I must lament the gloomy prospects of both kingdoms, and receive a discharge from the service of government as the only honour an English minister can confer on an Irish subject.

“ I conceive the continuance of Lord Fitzwilliam is necessary for the prosperity of this kingdom: his firm integrity is formed to correct, his mild manners to reconcile, and his private example to discountenance a progress of vulgar and rapid pollution: if he is to retire, I condole with my country—for myself, the pangs on that occasion, I should feel on rendering up my small portion of ministerial breath would be little, were it not for the gloomy prospects afforded by those dreadful guardians, which are likely to succeed. I tremble at the return to power of your old task-master; that combination which galled the country with its tyranny, insulted her by its manners, exhausted her by its rapacity, and slandered her by its malice: should such a combination at once, inflamed as it must be now by the favour of the British court, and by the reprobation of the Irish people, return to power, I have no hesitation to say, that they will extinguish Ireland, or Ireland must remove them; it is not your case only, but that of the nation. I find the country already committed in the struggle; I beg to be committed along with her, and to abide the issues of her fortunes. Whatsoever shall be the event, I will adhere to her interests to the last moment of my life.”

1795.

March, 1795, Lord Fitzwilliam took his departure from Ireland, when the resentment, grief, and indignation of the public were most strongly marked. It was a day of general gloom; the shops were shut; no business of any kind was transacted, and the whole city put on mourning. His coach was drawn to the water-side by some of the most respectable citizens, and cordial sorrow appeared on every countenance.

CHAPTER VII.

Administration of Earl Camden.

1795.

Appointment of
Lord Camden.

EARL CAMDEN, who before the appointment of his immediate predecessor had been destined by Mr. Pitt to fill the situation of viceroy, as the best calculated to continue the system of Lords Buckingham and Westmoreland, arrived in Dublin, five days after Lord Fitzwilliam had left it. Mr. Pitt's two grand objects had been carried by the unprecedented vote of 1,700,000*l.* towards carrying on the war, and the degradation and further division of the proselytes he had enticed from the Rockingham party. So much displeasure appeared on Lord Camden's arrival, that it was found necessary to call out the military to prevent outrage.

Catholic
meeting in
Francis-
street.

Still the rage for meetings continued. On the 9th of April the catholics met in their chapel in Francis-street, in Dublin, to receive the report of the delegates, who had presented their petition at St. James's: when Mr. Keogh reported, that in execution of their mission they had on the 13th of March presented their petition to his Majesty, and had received what was generally termed a gracious reception. That they had afterwards felt it their duty to request an audience with the Duke of Portland, the secretary of state for the home department, to receive such information as

1795.

he should think fit to impart relative to his Majesty's determination on the subject of their address. That his grace declined giving any information whatever; save that his Majesty had imparted his pleasure thereon to the lord-lieutenant, and that he was the proper channel, through which that information should pass. Here their mission was determined. Mr. Keogh spoke strongly upon the critical situation of affairs. The failure of their wishes would, he hoped, rouse the Irish legislature to a sense of its own dignity. It shewed, that the internal regulations of Ireland, to which alone an Irish parliament was competent, were to be previously adjusted by a British cabinet. A very animated debate ensued; in which the speakers emulated each other in enhancing the advantages of an union of Irishmen of every description. And now for the first time they spoke of and deprecated an union with Great Britain, to which they saw the present system of measures was obviously directed.

Whilst this debate was going on, a large party of the young men of the college* came into the chapel,

Admission
of the
young men
of the col-
lege to the
catholic
meeting.

* "It has been the constant custom with the University of Dublin, to present addresses of congratulation to every newly arrived chief governor: that day was appointed for presenting their offering to Lord Camden. While the procession was on its way, the students, as if with one consent, broke off, and left the Provost and Fellows to make what appearance before his excellency they might think fit, while they themselves turned into a coffee-house, at the Castle gate; and there prepared an address to Mr. Grattan, approving of his public character and conduct. This they presented directly, and having done so, they repaired to Francis-street chapel, where the catholics were assembled.

1795.

and were most honorably received. The freedom of speech used by the gentlemen, who took part in this debate, gave heinous offence at the castle.

Lord-lieu-
tenant ad-
dressed.

On the 13th of April, 1795, Lord Cole moved a congratulatory address to the lord-lieutenant on his arrival to take on him the government of the kingdom, which was carried without a division. Mr. Grattan however said, he felt himself much more strongly inclined to condole with the country on the recal of Lord Fitzwilliam, than to congratulate it on the appointment of Lord Camden. He afterwards moved for a committee to enquire into the state of the nation, on which occasion he confidently asserted what he knew was generally known, that the Duke of Portland had declared *, “ he accepted office principally with a view to reform the abuses in the government of Ireland ; that the system of that government was execrable : so execrable, as to threaten not only Ireland with the greatest misfortune, but ultimately the empire ; that his grace would have gone in person, if he had not found a second self in Lord Fitzwilliam, his nearest

They entered while Mr. Keogh was speaking ; and that ready as well as able orator instantly seized the incident, and hallowed the omen. They were received with the most marked respect and affection ; the catholics taking that opportunity of shewing, that the language of union and brotherly love, which they were uttering, only expressed the sentiments nearest their hearts.” *Pieces of Irish History*, p. 114. The address to Mr. Grattan and his answer are very interesting, and may be seen in my *Historical Review*, p. 572.

* 15 Parl. Deb. p. 165.

1795.

and dearest friend, whom he persuaded to accept the Irish government, and to whom he committed the important office of reforming the manifold abuses in that government. That the removals were stipulated for by that part of the British cabinet : and catholic emancipation was not only the concession of that quarter of the cabinet, but its precise engagement." This first division under Lord Camden of 48 for, and 158 against the motion, shewed the strength of government in the house. The 4th of May, 1795, brought on the important debate on the second reading of the Roman Catholic bill for their total emancipation. The solicitor-general moved, that it should be rejected. The motion was seconded by Lord Kingsborough, who spoke violently against the bill. Almost every gentleman, who had before spoken in parliament, took part in the debate. Mr. Arthur O'Connor made one of the most brilliant speeches ever heard in the Irish parliament in support of it*. It was now for the first time urged, that if the bill should pass, the King would infringe his coronation oath. This formed the chief novelty of argument. Never was there a more heated debate in parliament. Although it were made a government question, some of their usual (more independent) sup-

* This speech first raised him into note : he was brought into parliament by his uncle, Lord Longueville, who was a supporter of administration. His lordship was so offended with the speech of his nephew, that the next morning he sent for him, and desired him to resign his seat, which accordingly he did.

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porters, left them on this occasion, and at the half-past ten o'clock of the morning of the 5th of May, the house divided, 155 for rejecting the bill and 84 against it. Thus was an end put to the fond and confident expectation, with which the great bulk of the Irish nation had been encouraged to look to their emancipation.

Motions
made by
opposition.

Sir Lawrence Parsons on the 18th of May, moved a resolution, of which he had long given notice, which was debated with more personal acrimony than any question throughout the session. The resolution was, * "that John Earl of Westmoreland, by authorizing such a number of regular troops to be sent out of this country, as left the remainder considerably less than the number appointed by law for the defence thereof, had been guilty of a violation of the compact entered into with the crown, and of dispensing with the law of the land." It was met by the question for adjournment, which after midnight was carried by a majority of 83 against 23. The only question of notice, that occurred during the remainder of the session, was Mr. Curran's motion for an address to the crown, seconded by Mr. Grattan: this was also defeated by the question of adjournment without a division. † The address was intended as a recorded publication of the senti-

* 15 Parliamentary Debates, p. 370.

† The address is in the *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 526; where also may be seen an account of the conduct of the British parliament upon the singular recall of Lord Fitzwilliam.

ments, and justification to posterity of the conduct of the gentlemen of opposition during that session of parliament.

1795.

On the 5th of June, 1795, the parliament was prorogued with the usual formalities. The lord-lieutenant's speech from the throne expressed his Majesty's acknowledgments for the very liberal supplies, and commended the benevolent relief of the poor from the tax of hearth-money; the wise foundation of a college for the education of the catholic clergy; and the satisfactory arrangement of issuing money from the treasury.

Parliament
prorogued.

During the summer the defenders rapidly increased. Severe outrages were committed upon the primate. The chancellor was wounded in his carriage on the head by a stone. The house of Mr. John Claudius Beresford was assailed. The chancellor and all the Beresfords were particularly obnoxious at this time, from their decided opposition to parliamentary reform and catholic emancipation; and from their having been prominently active in procuring the removal of Lord Fitzwilliam. The British cabinet replaced those persons, whom the people, at that time, looked upon as their greatest enemies, and they resumed their situations with redoubled propensity to strong measures. Henceforward the popular societies began to settle into a system of mysterious secrecy. The secret committee of the lords declared, that * "the attainment of what are called parliamentary reform and catholic emancipation were and

Increase of
Defenders
and United
Irishmen.

1795.

continued to be holden out by them merely as a pretence for their associations, and with a view to seduce persons, who were not apprized of their traitorous designs, to unite with them." Some leading heads of these societies, whose real views were to separate Ireland from Great Britain, took advantage of the critical moment, and converted this increased austerity of government into a most powerful engine for forwarding their traitorous designs.

Nature of
the Irish
Union.

Three members of the executive of the Irish Union, Messrs. O'Connor, Emmett, and Dr. M'Neven, whilst in prison, wrote a detailed memoir of its origin and progress, and delivered it in to the Irish government; in which they say, "The first of these societies, as we best recollect, in the year 1795, in order to secure co-operation and uniformity of action, organized a system of committees, baronial, county, and provincial, and even national; but it was long before the skeleton of this organization was filled up. While the formation of these societies was in agitation, the friends of liberty were gradually, but with a timid step, advancing towards republicanism; they began to be convinced, that it would be as easy to obtain a revolution as a reform, so obstinately was the latter resisted; and as the conviction impressed itself on their minds, they were inclined not to give up the struggle, but to extend their views; it was for this reason, that in their test the words are, *an equal representation of all the people of Ireland*, without inserting the word parliament. This test embraced both the republican and the reformer, and left to future cir-

1795


cumstances to decide, to which point the common strength should be directed ; but still the whole body, we are convinced, would rejoice to stop short at reform. Another consideration, however, led the minds of reflecting united Irishmen to look towards a republic and separation from England ; this was the war with France ; they clearly perceived, that their strength was not likely to become speedily equal to wresting from the English and the borough interest in Ireland even a reform ; foreign assistance would therefore perhaps become necessary ; but foreign assistance could only be hoped for in proportion as the object, to which it would be applied was important to the party giving it. A reform in the Irish parliament was no object to the French : a separation of Ireland from England was a mighty one indeed. Thus they reasoned : shall we, between two objects, confine ourselves to the least valuable, even though it be equally difficult to be obtained, if we consider the relation of Ireland with the rest of Europe.

“ Whatever progress the united system had made among the catholics throughout the kingdom, until after the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, notwithstanding many resolutions, which had appeared from them, manifesting a growing spirit, they were considered as entertaining an habitual spirit for monarchy, but also as being less attached than the presbyterians to political liberty. There were, however, certain men among them, who rejoiced at the rejection of their claims, because it gave them an opportunity of pointing out that the adversaries of reform were their adversaries ;

1795.

and that these two objects could never be separated with any chance of success to either. They used the recal of that nobleman, and the rejection of his measures, to cement together in political union the catholic and presbyterian masses.

“The modern societies, for their protection against informers and prosecution, had introduced into their test a clause of secrecy. They did more: they changed the engagement of their predecessors into an oath; and mutual confidence encreased, when religion was called in aid of mutual security.”

Test of the
United
Irishmen.

From reflection and experience, the people became convinced, that no system but that of union could succeed; they therefore formed themselves into affiliated societies, and adopted the following solemn test: “In the awful presence of God, I, *A. B.* do voluntarily declare, that I will persevere in endeavouring to form a brotherhood of affection among Irishmen of every religious persuasion; and that I will also persevere in my endeavours to obtain an equal, full, and adequate representation of all the people in Ireland. I do further declare, that neither hopes, fears, rewards, or punishments shall ever induce me, directly or indirectly, to inform of, or give evidence against, any member or members of this or similar societies, for any act or expression of their's done or made, collectively or individually, in or out of this society, in pursuance of this obligation.” In the course of this year united societies were formed in most parts of the kingdom.

Government became alarmed. Agents were sent to Armagh; to turn the ferocity and fanaticism of the Peep-of-Day Boys into a religious contest with the catholics under an imposing zeal for church and King. Personal animosity was artfully converted into religious rancour: and for the specious purpose of taking off the stigma of delinquency, the appellation of Peep-of-Day Boys was changed into that of *Orange Men*. At first no person of consequence appeared in it: the first lodge was formed on the 21st of September, 1795. Like the United Irishmen, they were soon affiliated, and their numbers increased. They pretended to support the constitution in the spirit of William the Prince of Orange. Their practices were intolerant and exterminating. * Their original test was said to have been: "In the awful presence of Almighty God, I, A. B. do solemnly swear, that I will, to the utmost of my power, support the King and the present government; and I do further swear, that I will use my utmost exertions to exterminate all the catholics of the kingdom of Ireland." The great increase of the Orange institution did not take place till the ensuing year.

1795.

Religious
contest en-
couraged
by govern-
ment.
Orange
Men.

* This form of test is what is generally believed to have been in use amongst the Orangemen: but the author has no authentic document for it. It is so stated in a pamphlet published in 1797, called, A View of the present State of Ireland, by an Observer, said to have been written by Mr. A. O'Connor. They were said to have had a secret test, which they called their *Purple Oath*. The secret committee of the lords in 1798 asked Mr. A. O'Connor, if government had any thing to do with their *Oath of Extermination*, which presupposes them to have had one.

1796.

Lord Car-
hampton's
strong mea-
sures.

The boldness of the defenders in the summer of 1795 assumed a most formidable appearance. So far were they from being countenanced by the catholics, that their most open outrages were attempted against some catholic magistrates in the county of Kildare, where they appeared in bodies of several hundreds. Lord Carhampton, impatient or dissatisfied at the law's delay, undertook to exert a vigour beyond it. He emptied all the prisons of their tenants, and without form of trial sent them, and every one he chose to suspect of disaffection, on his own authority, to serve on board the fleet. Above 1300 were thus transported from their homes during the summer. The measure was as highly applauded by government, as it was severely reprobated by the opposition. In the summer assizes of this year several defenders were tried and found guilty of high treason; and the animosity of the Defenders and Peep-of-Day Boys was renewed in the county of Armagh, to such a degree, that on the 21st of September, the battle of the Diamond, so called from the village of that name, was fought, in which the defenders, though greatly superior in number, were worsted with considerable slaughter. From this defeat of the defenders, are to be traced the increased rancour and ferocity of their opponents, who had formed themselves into clubs of Orangemen, and thereby having increased their strength, meditated the extermination of the whole race of catholics out of the county of Armagh.

Parliament
meets.

When the parliament met on the 21st of January, 1796, the lord-lieutenant after having alluded to the

1796.


general affairs of the continent, and noticed some domestic occurrences, and prepared them for a heavy loan, adverted to those secret and treasonable associations, the dangerous extent and malignity of which had in some degree been disclosed on several trials, and to the disturbances, which had taken place in some parts of the kingdom, and called upon their prudence and wisdom to devise such measures as, together with a continuance of those exertions, and the additional powers, which, by the advice of the privy council, he had thought it necessary to establish in different counties, would prevent the return of similar excesses. Upon the motion for an address, Mr. Grattan objected only to that part of the address, which expressed a confidence in the present administration. The people of Ireland were loyal to their Sovereign, for which they had been treated with insolence and contumely. The system of the administration for several years had been profligate and corrupt. The horns of government had been sent out to the different grand juries, in order to procure addresses and resolutions to wall out the catholics from the constitution, as the English had formerly walled out the Scotch, and the Chinese the Tartars. The British cabinet, during the administration of Lord Fitzwilliam, had broken faith with Ireland. He reprobated the conduct of Lord Westmoreland in granting the reversion of every capital employment in the kingdom, after his successor had been appointed; said that during his administration, fourteen new employments had been created, and thirteen reversions granted away. The

1796.

conduct of the British cabinet towards their country was influenced by false witnesses against Ireland ; by bad viceroys, who had acted in their administration unfavorably to Ireland ; and if not by viceroys, the British cabinet was influenced by clerks, by spies, and by runners. Fourteen only supported his amendment, against 122.

Strong
measures
introduced
by the at-
torney-ge-
neral.

The attorney-general besides bringing in two bills, for preventing insurrections, tumults, and riots, and for indemnifying magistrates acting against the law, moved the following resolutions :

1. “ *Resolved*, That the spirit of conspiracy and outrage, which has appeared in certain parts of this kingdom, and has shewn itself in various attempts to assassinate magistrates, to murder witnesses, to plunder houses, and seize by force the arms of his Majesty’s peaceable subjects, requires, that more effectual powers should be given to the magistracy.

2. “ *Resolved*, That (in such parts of this kingdom, as the said spirit has shewn itself, or to which there may be cause to apprehend its being extended) it will be necessary, that the magistracy should have enlarged powers of searching for arms, ammunition, and weapons of offence, and of seizing or securing the same, for the preservation of the peace, and the safety of the lives and properties of his Majesty’s peaceable and loyal subjects.

3. “ *Resolved*, That from the many attacks, which have been made on the houses of individuals, by large bodies of armed insurgents, for the purpose of taking arms and money by force, and murdering those, who

had the spirit to inforce the laws, or give information against offenders, it will be necessary, that the magistracy should have enlarged powers, to prevent such bodies hereafter from assembling or meeting, either to plan or execute such horrid purposes. 1796.

4. “*Resolved*, That it will be necessary to give the magistracy further powers with respect to vagabonds, idle and disorderly persons, and persons liable to be deemed so, or who have no lawful trade, or any honest means to obtain a livelihood.”

These resolutions were ushered in by a minute detail of the outrages committed during the four preceding years by the Defenders; without reference to the atrocities committed during the same period by the Peep-of-Day Boys. Of those outrages, Mr. Grattan gave a minute detail. Their object was the extermination of all the catholics of that county; it was a persecution conceived in the bitterness of bigotry, and carried on with ferocious barbarity by a banditti, who called themselves Orange Boys, or Protestant Boys, committing massacre in the name of God, and exercising despotic power in the name of liberty. They formed themselves into a committee, tried the catholics, and sent them either on board a tender or to a recruiting officer as deserters. They gave them short notices to quit their dwellings, in the laconic words, “Hell or Connaught;” and they followed them by punctual execution of the horrid threat. The measure proposed was defective; it was a partial description of the outrages of the kingdom, and a partial remedy; it proposed to suspend the operation of the

Effects of
the Resolu-
tions on the
house.

1796.


constitution, with a view to produce peace, leaving at the same time, in one great county, violence and insurrection in a state of triumph. About 800 catholic families of Armagh were forced by a violent mob, and a supine magistracy, to abandon their dwellings, and carry themselves and families, and tales of woe, to their brethren in the other parts of the kingdom, and spread the flames of discontent, and spirit of retaliation. The evil was greatly aggravated by the magistrates of the county of Armagh, several of whom refused to take the examination of the injured catholics. By some of those very magistrates they had been cruelly persecuted; others would hear them only out of the window, and some actually turned them from their doors with threats. These circumstances produced a very spirited and proper letter, or address, from Lord Gosford, which, by some on the treasury bench, was complained of as incautious*. Their argument for not taking particular notice of the county of Armagh was, that the existing laws were sufficient to punish the crimes, by which that country was convulsed; whereas the enormities there committed were emphatically admitted by Lord Gosford, the governor, to extend beyond the reach of the law. On the 24th of March the money bills were presented, and on the 15th of April the parliament was prorogued.

* For this letter, which is a most valuable piece of unimpeachable evidence of the spirit and nature of the persecutions then going forward in Armagh, vide Appen. to my Hist. Rev. No. XCIX.

1796.

Ferment
out of par-
liament.

The ferment of the public was encreased by an abusive pamphlet written by one of the secretaries of the castle, though published anonymously, reflecting upon Mr. Grattan and Lord Fitzwilliam. It produced a most virulent war on paper. It was generally believed, that 7000 catholics had been forced or burned out of the county of Armagh, and that the ferocious banditti, who had expelled them had been encouraged, connived at, and protected by the government. At the Lent assizes of this year the sheriff, governor, and grand jury of the county of Armagh, published an address and resolutions, to soften the public impression of the ferocious outrages of those exterminators. Their annunciation of impartial justice to every denomination was rather unseasonable, when there remained no longer in their county any of one denomination to commit outrages upon, or to retaliate injuries. These resolutions were chiefly produced by the prosecutions, which had been carried on by the provincial committees of the United Irishmen against the most notorious offenders, and some of the most guilty magistrates of Armagh. But that measure encreased the mischief in another way. Many of those, who attempted to swear examinations, were killed or forced to fly, and others compelled, by the fear of death, to retract or contradict the evidence they had given. Most of those prosecutions, which proceeded were either permitted to be eluded by legal artifice, or defeated by the hand of power. The only effectual relief, which the wretched fugitives experienced was from the United Irishmen of Belfast. They found

1796.  it useless to look up for any redress to the laws of the land or the government of the country. As they spread, they carried with them the fame of the sincerity and cordiality of the northerns towards the persecuted catholics of Armagh, and inspired all their brethren with a confidence in their protectors. Their gratitude and sympathies extinguished former prejudices against the northerns and dissenters; and taught remote districts, to which the system of union had been till then unknown, to admire and adopt it.

Extension
of the
union.

About this time the union gained considerable strength from its coalition with the defenders, particularly in the counties of Down and Antrim; and afterwards extended to others*. From the first formation of the union, its most active members were anxious to learn the views and intentions of the defenders. The latter wished to redress many of those grievances, against which the efforts of the former were directed; but their wishes were not sufficiently seconded by intelligence, nor did their institution appear calculated for co-operation on an extensive scale: it seemed almost exclusively catholic, and, as far as could be ascertained, was not sufficiently representative. Besides, as most counties had something peculiar to themselves, either in their test, their formalities, or their signs, a defender in one county, therefore, was not one in another; and the association, or rather mass of associations, wanted uniformity of views and

* *Pieces of Irish History*, p. 140.

1796.

actions. As it owed its origin to religious animosities, and was almost entirely composed of illiterate persons, there was reason to apprehend, it might still be vitiated by bigotry and ignorance, and that instead of reserving its physical force for one object and one effort, it might waste itself, as was actually the case in Connaught, in partial and ineffectual insurrections against local grievances. The united system, on the other hand, by pursuing only one thing, "an equal, full, and adequate representation of the people," secured an uniformity of views, and by fixing attention on the state of representation, as the fruitful parent of every evil, it suggested, wherever it gained admission, a remedy for the oppressions, by which the inhabitants were most afflicted. Proceeding on the principle of abolishing all political distinctions on account of religion, and of establishing a brotherhood of affection among Irishmen of every persuasion, it struck at the root of bigotry, received the support and secured the co-operation of every sect, that was not rendered hostile, by an immediate interest in the abuses it proposed to remedy. Organized under a series of committees, which were connected together to the highest rank, it was capable of perfect co-operation; and had in itself all the advantages of a provisional representative government, to which it was habituating its members. There was no repugnancy in the tests of the two bodies, and many catholics had from the commencement belonged to both. Many protestant United Irishmen resolved to break the exclusively catholic appearance of defenderism; there being nothing in the test

1796.

or regulations to prevent them, they were sworn into that body, and carried along with them their information, tolerance, and republicanism. They pointed out to their new associates, that the something, which the defenders vaguely conceived, ought to be done for Ireland, was by separating it from England to establish its real as well as nominal independence; and they urged the necessity of combining into one body all who were actuated with the same views. The defenders, by specific votes in their own societies, agreed to be sworn United Irishmen, and incorporated in large bodies into the union. It is to be remarked, that in the summer of 1796 few of the leaders of the subsequent rebellious union were acting with the members of the first open and avowed Society of United Irishmen*.

Arming of
the union,
and the
people.

† With a view of being prepared as much as pos-

* In the memoir of O'Connor, Emmett, and M'Neven, they say (p. 9), "None of us were members of the united system until September or October, in the year 1795." Mr. T. W. Tone had fled the country in 1795, upon suspicion of being implicated in the treason of the Rev. Mr. Jackson, who was found guilty of high treason on the 23d of April, 1795. When he was called up to receive sentence, he died in court of the poison he had previously taken. Mr. Hamilton Rowan about the same time escaped out of prison to the continent. Mr. Napper Tandy having been indicted for high treason about the same time, was proceeding to take his trial at Dundalk; when he was met about twelve miles from that town by his attorney, who apprizing him of the dead weight of evidence against him, returned to Dublin, and fled to the continent.

† Report of the Secret Committee XVII. Com. Journals, DCCCXXIX. An account of the military organization is to be seen Historical Review, p. 568.

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sible to co-operate with the enemy then expected, and in order to counteract the effect of the armed associations of yeomanry, established in October, 1796, directions were issued by the leaders of the societies, to form themselves into military bodies, and to be provided with arms and ammunition. These directions were so effectually obeyed, that the numbers of armed men in the province of Ulster alone amounted nearly to one hundred thousand, ready to take the field on the arrival of the enemy or whenever they might receive orders to that effect from their superior officers. The arming of this society was not originally intended: but was only introduced after the passing the insurrection and indemnity acts, when the people began to be more than ever carried towards resistance, and were extremely irritated by the indemnified violations of law in the north*. The whole number of the united body now consisted of 500,000 men. About the end of the year 1796, the United Irishmen grew much more outrageous and formidable throughout the province of Ulster. But the charge of their holding regular committees of assassination is false. Some private murders, and the survivors of the most obnoxious characters, to whom members of the union had constant access, would refute the charge of any such organised system of bloodshed, had it not been formally denied and disclaimed by the gentlemen, who gave in a very correct memoir of the rise and progress of the union. The public fever advanced with the season. Many outrages of the defenders were punished by the

* Memoir IX.

1796.

military in a most unwarrantable manner upon innocent untried persons, without charge or trial. Upon mere suspicion or absence of a landlord, they burned houses, maimed, and sometimes murdered the natives, for merely inhabiting the districts, into which they were sent. Terrible is the consequence of protecting crime. At the assizes of Armagh, Colonel Sparrow was tried and found guilty of murdering a Mr. Lucas; upon his receiving sentence, he produced his Majesty's pardon to the court, and was instantly liberated. This greatly irritated the people: as did the encouragement given by government to Orangemen, in allowing them two guineas per man, for arms and accoutrements. In the autumn of this year government encouraged the formation of armed corps of yeomanry, which were at first strongly disrelished and opposed by many; and the catholics not being generally admitted into these corps, resented their rejection as an invidious distinction, tending to question their loyalty and sincerity in their country's cause. They accordingly waited on Mr. Pelham, the secretary, for leave to raise a catholic corps, but were told, that if they chose they might join the corps then raising by their protestant fellow-subjects. Some few did; but the shyness and reluctance, with which catholics were admitted into the protestant corps of yeomanry, kept most from joining them. The dread of a French invasion was the ostensible reason for embodying these corps. Nothing so much reconciled them to the public, as the formation of the lawyer's corps. At a general meeting of the bar, on the 14th of Septem-

ber, 1796, it was resolved, that they held it expedient, with the permission of government, to form an armed association for the defence of the kingdom.

1796

Minister's
partiality
for Orange
men.

It was objected to the administration, that whilst they proclaimed the houghing of a bullock in the south, they smothered in silence the murder and proscription of hundreds of human beings in the north : that no statute, proclamation, or resolutions of public bodies, had specified or punished the crimes of the Orangemen in Armagh, no perpetrators of them had been punished, not a single magistrate had been stricken out of the commission, though many were known to have connived at and encouraged those outrages : and that several were rewarded by commands in the yeomanry corps, and otherwise favored by government. An invitation from the county and borough of Armagh to Mr. Pelham and Dr. Duigenan, to represent them in the ensuing parliament, riveted in the minds of the great mass of the people the firmest conviction, that the impunity of these fanatic exterminators of Armagh found countenance, support, and favor from the seat of civil and ecclesiastical power. The congenial opposition given by Mr. Pelham and Dr. Duigenan to the question of catholic emancipation, recommended them to Armagh. The contrary spirit of toleration endeared Colonel (now Lord) Hutchinson* to the city of Cork.

* In his address to the electors of Cork on the 6th of October, 1796, amongst other matters, this gentleman, whose gallant conduct his sovereign has since rewarded with a peerage, thus accosted his constituents after the usual introductory compliments.

1796.

Early meet-
ing of par-
liament.

The parliament met on the 13th of October, 1796, when the lord-lieutenant informed them, that his Majesty had required their attendance thus early in consequence of the enemy's threatening a descent upon that kingdom, which he confided in the spirit, loyalty, and zeal of his faithful people of Ireland to repel : now for the first time he took tender notice of the disturbances of Armagh. * " I have however to lament, that in one

" It would be ridiculous in me to make you a vain display, and an idle pageantry of my loyalty, which no man has ever presumed to doubt or deny. Brought up in the army almost from my infancy, and now a general officer in the King's service, I must be loyal from duty, interest, affection, habit, and feeling ; it would be too late for me to desert that cause, for which I have fought, and for which I am ready to die.

" I love and revere our glorious constitution ; I have studied and endeavoured to comprehend its principles, and have yet to learn, that they tend to exclusion or intolerance. Sure I am, that the representation of all freehold property is the basis, upon which it is erected ; and that every departure from this its vital principle, is a violation of that constitution, which will be most applauded by those, who understand it best. To unite all sects in one common comprehension, to consolidate the nation, in order to give security to the people, strength to the empire, and dignity to the crown, has ever been the first object of my political life. These were my sentiments open and avowed long before I had the honor of representing you in parliament. Your own experience has proved, that they were not founded in error ; you must have uniformly observed, that the prosperity of the country has increased in direct proportion with the relaxation of the penal code ; and you must be convinced, that the circumstances of the times, and the situation of surrounding Europe, imperiously require the union of all the inhabitants of this island."

part of the country good order has not yet been entirely restored; and that in other districts a treasonable system of secret confederation, by the administering of illegal oaths, still continues, although no means within the reach of government have been left untried to counteract it." *Mr. Grattan objected to the speech. It contained no reconciling matter. After a brilliant speech, he moved the following amendment: "To represent to his Majesty, that the most effectual method for strengthening the country and promoting unanimity was to take such measures, and to enact such laws, as to ensure to all his Majesty's subjects the blessings and privileges of the constitution, without any distinction of religion." The amendment was only supported by 12 against 149. When the house was in a committee for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, Mr. George Ponsonby observed, that were he to stand alone, he should exert his utmost powers to resist the measure. After a long and intemperate debate, 7 only voted with Mr. Ponsonby, and 137 with the minister.

The preparations of the French for a descent upon Ireland had been spoken of throughout Great Britain and Ireland during the whole of the autumn, with a familiarity, that bred discredit in the people and neglect in the government. The armament consisted of twenty-five ships of the line, including the seven that composed the squadron of Admiral Richery, who was to join it with all speed, fifteen stout frigates, besides

French invasion.

* 17 Parl. Deb. p. 3.

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sloops and transports for an army of 25,000 men, to be commanded by General Hoche, an officer of distinguished ability. On going out of Brest, on the 18th of December, some of the largest ships struck upon the rocks at the mouth of the harbour, some were lost, and others rendered unfit for service. The day after its departure, a violent storm arose, which dispersed the fleet, and damaged many more of the ships. This tempestuous weather lasted during the whole time of the expedition. On the 24th, Admiral Bouvet, commander in chief of the French fleet, anchored with seven ships of the line, and ten others, in Bantry Bay. In order to reconnoitre the country, a boat was dispatched towards shore; but it was immediately captured, and multitudes appeared on the beach in readiness to oppose a landing. After lying some days in this bay, the storminess of the weather increased, and receiving no intelligence of General Hoche and his staff, who were in a frigate, that parted from the fleet in the gale of wind, the French admiral determined to quit his position, and return to France. The land-officers insisted on landing the troops; but, as General Hoche was absent, he refused to comply with their representations, and set sail for Brest, where he arrived on the last day of December. The other divisions of his fleet had also the good fortune to reach that harbour, with the loss upon the whole of five ships, two of the line, and three frigates. Ireland, notwithstanding the superiority of the British fleet, was sixteen days at the mercy of the enemy, and saved from attack only by the elements. For it is shamefully

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notorious, that no preparation was made by land or sea to resist the invasion, on behalf of either the British or Irish cabinet. The people were loyal, because left to themselves. Nothing could exceed the consternation, which the report of the arrival of the French fleet off Bantry Bay created in the capital, except the loyalty and zeal of all ranks of people to go out and meet the enemy. The improvidence of government in not preparing against the expected attempt of the enemy was vehemently, though ineffectually, urged by the opposition in the house of commons*. The peasantry vied with each other in clearing the roads, and administering to the troops whatever comforts their scanty means and bountiful hearts enabled them.

The fortuitous failure of the French invasion furnished a strong test of the loyal disposition of the Irish people; and gave rise to reports, that measures of conciliation towards Ireland had been resolved on by the British cabinet. Catholic emancipation and temperate reform were once more confidentially spoken of: and Lord Camden, whose administration was pledged to resist those two questions, it was generally expected would immediately resign. These flattering prospects were encouraged by a further report, that the Prince of Wales had offered his services to the King to go to Ireland in quality of lord-lieutenant, and to exert all his popularity with that nation, in restoring it to tran-

Report of
the Prince
of Wales'
going over
viceroy to
Ireland.

* This matter was afterwards brought on, and very warmly debated in both houses of the British parliament: but with the like failure. An ample report of their proceedings may be seen in *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 599, &c.

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quillity. His royal highness had proposed to take with him Earl Moira as commander in chief, with a splendid establishment worthy of the dignity of the people, whose royal sovereign he was to represent. The prince had at this time entered cordially into the true political situation of that kingdom ; and in order that no mistake might even be pretended, relative to his Royal Highness's sentiments upon the Irish nation, he delivered a paper to the minister, drawn up in the most concise, energetic, and constitutional language, expressive of his disposition and judgment in favor of a system of conciliation. The British minister received the proposition with all the respect, which the patriotism, judgment, and virtue of the exalted character who made it, deserved. It was the subject for a time of most important discussion : but the power of the Irish junto prevailed : the system of coercion preponderated : and the offer even of the heir-apparent to the crown to attempt the conciliation of the Irish people was rejected. Both the British and Irish ministers appeared to dread the opportunity, which Ireland would then have of testifying their predilection and admiration of that illustrious prince ; and the occasion, which such an appointment would afford to his Royal Highness of displaying his affection for the people of Ireland, in a mild system of measures, politic at all times, necessary at that time, and supereminently congenial with his own disposition and sentiments.

Catholic
question
lost for the
last time
before the
Irish par-
liament

Mr. Grattan on the 17th of February, 1797, introduced the question of catholic emancipation. To his old arguments he added new light and strength : he

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discussed all our continental alliances lost, gained, or retained: ridiculed the idea of popish tenets entering into the grounds of their formation or abandonment. He investigated the principles, pretext, and method of raising the Irish brigade of 6000 catholics, under catholic and French officers. He calculated the numerical and physical advantages, which the British navy and army received from Ireland; and concluded by moving the following resolution: * "That the admissibility of persons professing the Roman Catholic religion to seats in parliament is consistent with the safety of the crown, and the connection of Great Britain with Ireland." The resolution was seconded by Mr. G. Ponsonby. Mr. Knox, Sir B. Roche, Sir Frederick Flood, Sir Hercules Langrishe, and several other members, who agreed with the principle of the resolution, voted against it, merely because they then thought it unseasonable to discuss the question. Dr. Duigenan launched into a diffuse and infuriated philippic against popery, abused all his catholic countrymen, and treated Mr. Byrne and Mr. Keogh as notorious traitors. The resolution was negatived upon a division of 143 against 19. This was the last time the question of catholic emancipation was brought before the Irish parliament.

In the debate upon a resolution moved by Sir L. Parsons for encreasing the yeomanry to 50,000, better to secure the country against invasion, Mr. Pelham said, that in hearing the honorable baronet,

Mr Pelham
disclaims
popularity,
and Mr.
Grattan's
reply.

* 17 Parl. Deb. p. 80.

1797. he had fancied himself in one of the circles in Germany, where different parties bid for the people. He assured the house, that, were the French to come again, such measures had been concerted with Great Britain, that a large body of troops would in a few hours be in Ireland. That it was absurd to suppose, the British minister would not be interested for the safety of Ireland. Mr. Grattan replied to Mr. Pelham, with great animation. "The English servant of the English minister said, What! would you have me bid for the people? He would say to that English deputy of that English minister, if he would not bid for the people, he might go about his business. If he would not bid for the people, the monster of democracy, which had conquered Spain, Holland, Germany, and Italy, by bidding for the people, would bid for the people of Ireland. The bidding of the minister would then come too late. He had asked, who could be more interested for the safety of Ireland, than the British minister? He would answer, Ireland herself."

Earl Moira's motion in the British peers relating to Ireland.

On the 21st of March Earl Moira introduced his promised motion into the British house of peers, by a very instructive and eloquent speech: it became the more interesting, as that noble lord was known recently to have come from Ireland, so that his judgment could not be misled from seeing the real state of that kingdom, nor his candor and loyalty be suspected of misrepresenting it. After adverting to the delicacy of agitating questions, in which independent legislatures, and their respective rights and privileges

1797.

were involved, he observed, that if it appeared, that the counsellors, more immediately about his Majesty's person had not given that advice, which was calculated to insure the happiness and prosperity of Ireland, it was the duty of their lordships to approach the throne with advice more wise and salutary. But it might be said, what influence could such an address carry with it, to change the councils, by which Ireland was governed? To prove the influence of the British cabinet, he appealed to a recent fact; he meant the recal of Earl Fitzwilliam, at a time when all Ireland concurred in the measures, which he pursued, when that country gave the fairest prospect of tranquillity, and the surest pledge of assistance and support to Britain, in the arduous circumstances in which she was placed. It was by temper, equity, and good faith, that the distractions of the Irish were to be appeased, and their affections conciliated. No good could be expected from a prosecution of the present system. He was confident, however, that the adoption of measures, calculated to impress the people with confidence in government, would quickly call forth that fond affection of the inhabitants of Ireland to this country, which circumstances might cloud but could not extinguish; inspire that zeal so necessary in the present moment; and furnish those resources, which were requisite for the critical situation, in which the empire was placed, and the arduous contest in which it was engaged. On these grounds he rested his motion, "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying, that he would be graciously pleased to inter-

1797.

pose his paternal and beneficent interference to allay the discontents, which at present subsist in his kingdom of Ireland, and which threaten the dearest interests of the British empire." Lord Grenville and the rest of the ministers vehemently opposed the motion. After a very interesting debate, the motion was rejected by 72 against 20.

Mr. Fox's
motion in
the British
Commons.

Two days after this discussion in the house of peers, the subject was introduced into the house of commons by Mr. Fox, in a speech, which eminently displayed his liberality and constitutional information. He moved, "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to take into his royal consideration, the disturbed state of his kingdom of Ireland, and to adopt such healing and lenient measures, as may appear to his Majesty's wisdom best calculated to restore tranquillity, and to conciliate the affections of all descriptions of his Majesty's subjects, in that kingdom, to his Majesty's person and government." The motion was seconded by Sir Francis Burdett; and strongly opposed by Mr. Pitt and his party. It was negatived upon a division of 200 against 84. The proceedings in the British parliament relative to the state of Ireland gave such offence to Dr. Duigman, that on the 30th of March he gave notice, that after the recess, he should bring forward a motion tending to refute the lying and malicious assertions made by Mr. Fox in the parliament of Great Britain.

Message
of his ex-
cellency.

Some days after, Mr. Secretary Pelham presented a message from his excellency, intimating the impos-

1797.

sibility of raising the sum of 3,395,697*l.* granted to his Majesty upon the terms mentioned in the resolution of that house on the 1st of March *, and recommending such measures, as should be most prudent to carry the intention of that salutary resolution into effect†. He also made to the house some days after a more important communication, “that two committees of United Irishmen in Belfast, had been arrested, and their papers seized; which contained matter of so much importance to the public welfare, that his excellency had directed them to be laid before the house of commons, for their consideration. That he should in the mean time pursue those measures, which had received their sanction and approbation, with unremitting vigour, and employ the force entrusted to him in the most efficient manner for the protection of his Majesty’s faithful subjects against all treasonable designs, and for bringing to condign punishment those, who were endeavouring to overturn the constitution, and betray that country into the hands of her enemies.” Upon which Mr. Pelham proposed to refer them to a committee of secrecy. Mr. Grattan would never agree to commit the people of Ireland to the mercy of a secret committee, which would put their lives and fortunes into the hands of ministers, whose misconduct was the subject of general complaint in both countries, and whose measures, whether parliamentary or military, tended equally to increase the calamities of

* 17 Parl. Debates, p. 466.

† Ibid. p. 477.

1797. the people. Mr. Pelham's motion for a secret committee was carried : the committee was ordered to consist of 15*. An adjournment of some weeks took place to accommodate those members, (many they were) whose professional duties called them on the circuits. Armagh, which had been for years the centre of religious acrimony, had by the progress of the union lost a great part of its ferocity.

General
sense of the
union.

So little then was that bond of union considered treasonable, that at the Armagh assizes, when the spirit and tendency of it were brought before the court on the trial of *Hanlon* and *Nogher*, who were charged with having tendered an unlawful oath or engagement to become one of an unlawful, wicked, and seditious society, called *United Irishmen*, the prisoners were acquitted : the counsel not only defended, but commended the institution. The judge thought the obligation illegal under the late act of parliament†. The failure of these two government prose-

* The method of appointing the committee was, for each member to give in his list of 15. The persons appointed were Mr. Pelham, Mr. D. La Touche, Mr. Ogle, Mr. J. C. Beresford, Mr. J. Stewart, Mr. J. Foster, Mr. Commissioner Beresford, Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. Prime Serjeant, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Alexander, Mr. D. Browne, Lord Boyle

† Of 28 United Irishmen, then in jail, two trials only were brought forward. In one of them, a soldier, suborned to prosecute Dogherty, was, upon his acquittal, put into the dock in his place, to abide his trial for perjury. The grand jury found a bill against him, and he remained in custody to take his trial. Mr. Curran said, in defence of the United Irishmen ; That he was delighted

cutions, and their backwardness in bringing any more to trial, afforded a triumph to the popular party, either in the rectitude or strength of their cause.

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When Mr. Pelham communicated the report of the secret committee to the house, on the 10th of May, which was ordered to be printed, he observed, that what then transpired must convince every man, that it was not legislation, which should be resorted to, to repress this daring and dark conspiracy, but those strong measures, which the executive government had already adopted, with the approbation of that house. The committee observed, * that the United Irishmen made a pretext of reform and emancipation, to cover a design to subvert instead of amending the constitution, to confiscate property and extinguish the possessors of it; and this they inferred from the circumstance of these two objects not having been mentioned in their papers as the end of their institution. In corroboration of which opinion, they transcribed a paper called the Donaghadee Resolutions, in which it was emphatically stated "to have been the opinion of the best statesmen, philosophers, and divines, that all power originates with the people;

The report
of the secret
committee.

to find, after so many of them had been immured in dungeons, without trial, that at length the subject had come fairly before the world, and instead of its being a system of organised treason and murder, it proved to be a great bond of national union, founded upon the most acknowledged principles of law, and every sacred obligation due to our country and Creator.

* 17 Parl. Deb. p. 522. Such a report was to be expected from the persons, who composed that committee.

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that when tyrants usurp power, or governors legitimately constituted degenerate into tyrants, it becomes the right and the duty of the people to take up arms to wrest that power from the hands, which abuse it, and restore it to those, to whom it of right belongs."

Mr. W. B. Ponsonby's resolutions for parliamentary reform.

Mr. W. B. Ponsonby was urgently pressed by government not to bring forward the question of parliamentary reform, in the moment of so alarming a ferment of the public mind. He deemed it indispensably necessary then, above all times, to agitate and adopt that measure as the only efficient means of ensuring the restoration of peace, confidence, and prosperity to the country. The galleries had overflowed at an early hour, and the speaker took the chair precisely at four o'clock, when Lord Castlereagh pre-occupied the attention of the house by moving, that the address of the lords on the subject of the treasonable papers should be then taken into consideration. He proposed an address to the throne, in which the house was to thank his Majesty for the measures, which had been already taken for restoring the due observation of the laws, and recommended the adoption of the most severe measures for the complete suppression of those dangerous disorders. Mr. Smith moved (though respectfully) an amendment, that his Majesty would use conciliatory measures to remove every pretext of discontent from the well-disposed, as well as measures of coercion for the prevention and punishment of conspiracy and treason; urging the necessity of correcting abuses, as well as adopting strong laws to repress disaffection. Mr. W. B. Ponsonby was resolved to

1797.

avoid the hackneyed plea of no specific plan of reform being proposed, when he brought forward the question of parliamentary reform. He first read, then moved the following resolutions :

“ 1. That it is indispensably necessary to a fundamental reform of the representation, that all disabilities, on account of religion, be for ever abolished; and that catholics shall be admitted into the legislature, and all the great offices of state, in the same extent, &c. as protestants now are.

“ 2. That it is the indispensable right of the people of Ireland to be fully and fairly represented in parliament.

“ 3. That in order that the people may be fully enabled to exercise that right, the privilege of returning members for cities, boroughs, &c. in the present form shall cease; that each county be divided into districts, consisting of 6000 houses each, each district to return two members to parliament.

“ 4. That all persons possessing freehold property to the amount of 40s. per annum; all possessed of leasehold interests, of the annual value of — — ; all possessed of a house, of the value of — — ; all who have resided for a certain number of years in any great city or town, following a trade ; and all who shall be free of any city, &c. by birth, marriage, or servitude, shall vote for members of parliament.

“ 5. That seats in parliament shall endure for — — number of years.”

Mr. Pelham thought the question ought not to be

1797. agitated, whilst a part of the country was in a state of rebellion; he therefore moved an adjournment, which at five o'clock in the morning was carried by 170 against 30 who were for reform*.

* In this debate Mr. Grattan spoke in a more impressive manner than usual. Taking up the language of the report, which referred to the alarm of government at the number of proselytes procured by the two popular subjects—parliamentary reform, and Catholic emancipation, he said, “It appears then, that they have recruited by these topics, and have spread their influence, notwithstanding your system of coercion every-where; that notwithstanding your convention bill of 1793, this convention has grown; that notwithstanding your gunpowder act, it has armed and increased its military stores under that act; that notwithstanding your insurrection act, and another bill to disarm, it has greatly added to its magazines; and that notwithstanding the suspension of the habeas corpus bill, and General Lake’s proclamation, it has multiplied its proselytes. I should have asked, had I been on the secret committee, whether the number of united Irishmen had not increased very much since General Lake’s proclamation, and by General Lake’s proclamation. It appears, I say, from that report, that just as your system of coercion advanced, the United Irishmen advanced; that the measures you took to coerce, strengthened; to disperse, collected; to disarm, armed; to render them weak and odious, made them popular and powerful: whereas, on the other hand, you have loaded parliament and government with the odium of an oppressive system, and with the further odium of rejecting these two popular topics, which you allow are the most likely to gain the heart of the nation, and be the beloved objects of the people.” Mr. Grattan closed his speech and the debate with these words: “We have offered you our measure; you will reject it: we deprecate your’s; you will persevere: having no hopes left to persuade or dissuade, and having discharged our duty, we shall trouble you no more, and after this day shall not attend the House of Commons.” 17 Parl. Deb. p. 570.


The extreme rigour of military government was enforced by General Lake in the northern district, in the execution of which barbarous outrages were committed by the military, which tended to exasperate the minds of the people, already too highly inflamed. Not only some women and children were murdered, but the houses of several respectable persons were pillaged and demolished, upon the bare suspicion of their being United Irishmen. Great discontent was created by a proclamation of General Lake*, made in consequence of a letter written to him by Mr. Pelham. It was greatly enflamed by the following circumstance. The newspaper called the Morning Star, published at Belfast, was the only paper into which the publications in favor of liberty could find their way. The proprietors of it had been committed to Newgate under the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act. The person, who then conducted the paper having been required, refused to insert a paragraph in it, which reflected on the loyalty of the people of Belfast: the next morning a detachment of the military issued very orderly from the barracks, attacked the printing office, and utterly demolished every part of it†. Other outrages were committed by the military on the inhabit-

1797.

Gen. Lake's
Proclama-
tion.

* Both this letter and the proclamation may be seen in the Appendix, No. CIV.

† It is credibly reported, that after the destruction of the Morning Star Printing Office, the commanding-officer, under whose eye this outrage was committed, exclaimed in triumph, "We may now do as we please, for as the Star is demolished, no other paper dares to publish any act we may do."

1797.  ants of Belfast: the house of Cunningham Gregg, Esq. was destroyed with impunity, and without any pretext or provocation. The harshness of this military despotism drove many to desperation, who had till then been loyally and peaceably disposed.

Abatement
of Rebel-
lion in Ul-
ster

The report of the secret committee was soon after followed by a proclamation, offering pardon, with certain exceptions, to all guilty persons who should surrender within the period of a month, and give security for their future good behaviour. The effect of this measure was immediately felt; the arms of the disaffected were collected in great numbers; the loyal were encouraged to declare themselves; such as had been misled, came in crowds to take the benefit of the proclamation of pardon, which was now extended for another month; outrage ceased, and public confidence was so far restored throughout Ulster in the course of the months of July and August, that the laws were administered with effect in the different counties during the summer circuit: the manufacturing industry of the country was restored to its usual vigor during the remainder of the year: and during and subsequent to the summer assizes, the civil authority was found fully adequate to the preservation of the public peace, and all military interference was generally discontinued from that period. Henceforward also the inferior societies of United Irishmen, in general, discontinued their meetings; the people applied themselves to their ordinary occupations; and though some of the higher committees were kept alive by some of the more active leaders,

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were apprehensive, that the enemy might be discouraged from any further plan of invasion, by the loyal disposition manifested throughout Munster and Connaught on their former attempt, yet they persisted in sending emissaries into the south and west, where their success in forming new societies and administering the oaths of the union, was very visible in the course of some few months. Here they revived the old grievance of tithes, and stimulated the senseless rabble to resort to the ancient practice of burning corn, and houghing cattle.

With a view to excite the resentment of the general population of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, reports of general massacres were circulated amongst the catholic peasantry. This fabrication, however extravagant, was among the means, by which the leaders of the rebellion endeavoured to prepare the people by disaffection to unite with the enemy in case of a future landing, and to dispose the enemy to take advantage of the discontents of the people, whilst they were in actual fermentation. None of these deluded people knew the game, which their leaders were playing. The design of separation and independence was still cautiously suppressed from the low members of the union.

Means of
seducing
the people.

In the summer of 1797, Mr. Lewins acted as the accredited minister of the Irish Union to negotiate with the French Directory, and the court of Spain, for men, arms, and money. Yet was the executive of the union decidedly against a greater force being sent to Ireland, than might enable them to subvert the government,

Negotiation
with the
French
Directory.

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and retain the power of the country in their own hands. The French on the other hand shewed a decided disinclination at all times to send any force to Ireland, except such as from its magnitude might not only give them hopes of subduing the kingdom, but of retaining it as a French conquest. It is a remarkable circumstance, that the memoir to the French Directory, with which Dr. M'Neven was charged, should have fallen into the hands of government. It proves their vigilance, or the perfidy of the Irish traitors, or of their French allies. Messrs. O'Connor, Emmett, and M'Neven tell us in the memoir (p. 21.) (they were nearly petrified at their first examination to see it lie on the table before them), that government *had some how or other obtained* their original memoir, to which they therefore refer, perhaps with more accuracy under that circumstance, than they might otherwise have done *. It sets forth with tolerable correctness the state of the country. It is lamentable to find, that the strongest incentive to instant invasion, was the assurance given to the enemy of the tyranny and oppression of the Irish government. The demands of the party by their first agent went to a force not exceeding ten thousand, nor less than five thousand, with forty thousand stand of arms, and a proportionate supply of artillery, ammunition, engineers, experienced officers, &c. But a larger supply of arms was solicited by a second mes-

* For the full substance of that important document, see Hist. Rev. vol. II. p. 630.

senger, on account of the growing number of their adherents, and of the disarming of the north. Above ten thousand stand of arms and as many pikes had been then surrendered to the King's troops, in Ulster. 1797.
A second memoir was presented to the French Directory*, urging them not to postpone the invasion, and assuring them, that so favorable a disposition, as then existed in the Irish mind, was in no future contingency to be expected. A confidential person was sent over by the French Directory to collect information respecting the state of Ireland, who was met in London by Lord Edward Fitzgerald. In consequence of their communications, the Directory ordered great preparations both on the Texel and at Brest, for the invasion of Ireland; and in the beginning of October, the approach of the enemy was announced to the societies as at hand. The troops were actually on board, commanded by General Daendells, but were suddenly disembarked. The Dutch fleet, contrary to the opinion of their own admiral, was, at the mandate of the French government, obliged to put to sea, which led to the memorable victory off Camperdowne, gained by Lord Duncan.

* The negotiation for peace was then going on at Lisle. It was candidly told to this agent, that the Directory did not think the English cabinet sincere, but that if France could get the terms she had a right to expect, the Directory would make peace. After the rupture of the negotiation, and Lord Malmesbury's return to England, assurances were given, that the French government would send a new expedition to Ireland, and that they would never abandon her, till she was separated from Great Britain: and these assurances were afterwards renewed.

1797.
 Internal
 effects of
 the union.

It was reported by the secret committee, that in the spring and summer of 1797, the mass of the people in the provinces of Leinster, Munster and Connaught was not infected with the union: and that in the north tranquillity was fast returning. The United Irishmen of the north were chiefly presbyterians and other protestants: there were comparatively few catholics amongst them. With so much circumspection were matters managed by the artful northerners, that the heaviest consequences of the union were thrown upon other parts of the kingdom. The system of coercion, induced several counties, corporations, and districts to apply to the sheriffs (most refused) * to convene

* These transactions are strongly represented in the petition of the Irish Whig Club to his Majesty, generally ascribed to the pen of Mr. Grattan, p. 9. "That minister, who determines to enslave the people, must renounce his project or wade through their blood. The people accordingly in the spring of 1797 resorted to the constitutional ways of petition, and applied to the different sheriffs to summon their counties, and on refusal by the sheriffs, (a dangerous courtly artifice to stop the prayers of the people from reaching the throne) they summoned themselves. What was the consequence? The petitioners were (we beg to represent to his Majesty) confounded with rebels, and the enemies of his ministers were represented as the enemies of his person; the petitioners were answered by fresh troops from England and Scotland; in some instances the meetings were dispersed by the army, and in others were deterred by the threat of military force; and thus did his Majesty's ministers ratify the justice of the petitions against them, by adding this great and impeachable offence to all their other transgressions; and thus did his Majesty's ministers reduce Ireland to the state of a miserable province, *whose ministers had stopped totally and absolutely the utterance of the people in parliament by corruption, in the nation by a convention bill, and in the counties by the army.*"

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meetings, in order to prepare addresses to the throne for the removal of his Majesty's ministers. These efforts of the people at large were no measures of the leaders of the union. They always considered the ministers as promoters of their views, by creating disaffection and discontent amongst the people: they exerted themselves in forwarding the resistance to the petitions of the people, and triumphed in their failure and rejection. The business of the union did not proceed during the remainder of the year 1797 with the same rapidity, that it had from the middle of the year 1796. For, * as the committee reported, the steps then taken, as mentioned in the proclamation, had an almost immediate effect in repressing the audacity of the rebels and restoring tranquillity. The loyal inhabitants were enabled in many places to return in safety to their houses; murders became less frequent; in many counties, particularly in Kildare and Tipperary, the people, sensible of the madness and wickedness of their conduct, began openly to acknowledge their crimes, surrender their arms, and point out their leaders and seducers; a submission, which invariably obtained for them pardon and protection.

After various adjournments, during which no business of moment was transacted, on the 3d of July, 1797, the parliament was prorogued†, and dissolved by proclamation on the 11th of July. The result of

Prorogation
and dissolution
of parliament.

* 17 Jour. Com. Appendix DCCCXXXIII.

* His excellency's speech is to be seen in *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 636.

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the summer circuits was unsatisfactory both to government and the people. An unusual number of offenders at most of the assizes was found guilty : but in the northern counties, where many had been confined for the greater part of the year upon the charge of being United Irishmen, they were mostly acquitted, when brought to trial. At Antrim, after several of them had been put on their trial and acquitted, Mr. Mark Beresford produced a warrant filled with the names of all the prisoners and several other obnoxious persons charged with high treason, by virtue of which the commission of gaol delivery was superseded, and those unfortunate wretches, who with a fond hope had looked up to their day of trial, as that of their delivery, were remanded back to goal without any trial, and thence removed to a military prison in Belfast. The acerbity of this measure created much irritation, and its illegality was declared by the King's Bench in the next Michaelmas term*. Towards the close of the year 1797, the union rather abated. One unequivocal symptom of it's decline was the renovation of dissention between the dissenters and the catholics in the north. Sir Richard Musgrave† reports, that most of the presbyterians separated from the papists in the year 1797; some from "principle,

* In B. R. 20th Nov. 1797. For the proceedings in the case of Thomas Huson, and eleven other prisoners, who had been brought up by *Habeas Corpus* from the Artillery Barracks at Belfast, to have the legality of their detention by General Lake and Colonel Barber examined by the court, vide *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 639.

† *Memoir*, p. 194.

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some because they doubted the sincerity of persons in that order: and others foreseeing, that the plot must fail and end in their destruction, took advantage of the proclamation of the 17th of May, and renounced their associates. Numbers withdrew because they doubted of success without foreign assistance. The presbyterians of the counties of Down and Antrim, where they are very numerous, and where they are warmly attached to the union from pure republican principles, thought they could succeed without the papists." Certain it is, that the northern unionists generally held back from this time: the protestants of Ulster were originally Scotch, and still retained much of that guarded policy, which so peculiarly characterizes the inhabitants of North Britain. From the autumn of 1797 the catholics first in the north and afterwards successively throughout the kingdom published * addresses and resolutions expressive of their horror of the principles of the United Irishmen, and pledging their loyalty and zeal in defence and support of the king and constitution. The northern addresses admitted the fact, and lamented, that many of the catholic body had been seduced into the union, and they deprecated the attempts, which were made to create dissention amongst persons of different religions. This example was followed by the generality of the dissenters. If addresses were tests of loyalty, his Majesty had not more loyal subjects throughout

* Some of these are to be seen in the Appendix to Historical Review, No. CVII.

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the British empire, than the Irish at the close of 1797. Scarcely a parish throughout the kingdom, scarcely a dissenting meeting-house, from which an address of loyalty was not issued signed by the priest or minister of the flock.

Lord
Moira's
motion in
the British
house of
peers.

So critically alarming for some time had the situation of Ireland appeared to that inflexible patriot, Earl Moira, that on the 22d of November, 1797, he renewed his application to the British house of lords, hoping to interest them in favor of the Irish people, and induce them to recommend measures of lenity and conciliation. He opened a very interesting, instructive, and eloquent speech, by taking a general view of the situation of the British empire, and lamented, that the prospective view of his country, which he had given in the last session, had been more than realized. His lordship* was ready to excuse Lord Camden, who acted by an overbearing impulse of others, who were driving the country to ruin. He would retail, but mention

* The testimony, which the noble earl here gave of the personal feelings and sentiments of the lord-lieutenant, are confirmed by the general report and belief, that his excellency had for some time been disgusted with the imperious overbearing, and relentless ferocity of the majority of the Irish cabinet: that having in vain attempted to assuage their rage for severity, he had so secretly negotiated his recal, that the actual appointment of his successor was the first suspicion those gentlemen had of a change. The British minister, though late, found the necessity of a firmer governor, who should neither be seduced nor intimidated into the sanguinary system of provocation, which had brought the country to that dire calamity, under which it then laboured. 4 Parl. Reg. p. 238.

1797.


no names. His lordship made a most moving narrative of acts of atrocity and oppression, adding that, from prudential motives he wished to draw a veil over more aggravated facts, which he could have stated, and which he was prepared to attest before the privy council, or at their lordships' bar. These facts were well known in Ireland, but they could not be made public through the channel of the newspapers, for fear of that summary mode of punishment, which had been practised towards the Northern Star, when a party of troops in open day, (and in a town where the general's head-quarters were), went and destroyed all the offices and property belonging to that paper. It was thus authenticated accounts were suppressed. His lordship concluded, with entreating the house to take into serious consideration their present measures, which, instead of removing discontents, had increased the number of the discontented. The moment of conciliation was not yet passed; but if the system were not changed, he was convinced Ireland would not remain connected with this country five years longer. Lord Grenville insisted, that his Majesty's government was so far from wishing to keep up a system of coercion, that he confidently appealed to the house, whether it had ever abandoned measures of concession or conciliation? No public man, placed in so critical a situation as Lord Camden, had ever displayed more exemplary moderation in the discharge of a painful duty. If severe measures had been adopted, the circumstances of the country had required it; and if any partial abuses existed, they had only to lament them. The question was, would their lordships interpose on

1797.

the present occasion, and tell the parliament of Ireland, and the Irish magistracy, that we were more careful of the interest and happiness of their people, than they themselves were; and that the English military were not to obey the Irish laws, but arbitrary instructions of the British parliament? Earl Moira replied, that no sentiment had fallen from him to that effect. He had not reprobated the troops in Ireland for obeying the law, but the conduct of the executive government, which was repugnant to the feelings of the Irish people, inconsistent with the British character, and highly injurious to the real interests of both countries. The chancellor justified all acts of rigor, by the existence of an horrid conspiracy in Ireland, and by the printed list* of the individuals marked for

* As this proscribed list was never acted upon, and the individuals named in it never found it necessary to resort to any extraordinary caution, or means of self-preservation; as secrecy was the baneful principle of the union, and as such a publication would have defeated the horrid project, had it ever been really formed, much credit must be given to Lord Moira's reply to the chancellor on this point. As to the paper, to which the noble and learned lord, and the noble secretary had alluded, concerning the names of persons marked out for future assassination, he confessed, he suspected it to be an invention to justify or to support the measures, which had been adopted in Ireland, and of which he had already complained. He suspected this the more, because no printer of a newspaper could have had it from any authentic source: for no man concerned in a conspiracy for assassination would communicate the intention of himself and colleagues. He wished to speak of assassins as he felt, with the greatest indignation and abhorrence; but he must also add, that he believed, that they originated in Ireland from private malice and revenge, and would do so from any party, which happened to be pre-

assassination, which he held in his hand. The debate was put an end to by a motion for adjournment.

1797.

Public diffidence in parliament.

That the public had lost or renounced all confidence in parliament, is evident from the apathy and coolness, with which the elections went over in the autumn. The people felt no interest in the return of particular members, having been so repeatedly foiled in all their efforts to obtain the two objects of their wishes, parliamentary reform, and catholic emancipation. Mr. Grattan increased and confirmed this apathy of the people, by declining to accept a seat in the new parliament. Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who had hitherto artfully concealed his traitorous designs, and by his amiable manners and conduct had fascinated most of his acquaintance into unqualified confidence, publicly alleged his reasons* for declining to offer himself to the consideration of the citizens of Dublin, as it once had been his design. By adopting the sentiments of Mr. Grattan, he sought to disguise his treason under the shield of the sublimest virtue and patriotism.

dominant, while the present dreadful system continued. It was not by a general system of terror, that assassination was to be defeated.

* In the Appendix to Historical Review, No. CVIII. may be seen Mr. Grattan's speech to a meeting of freemen and freeholders of the city of Dublin, assembled at the Exchange on the 20th of July, 1797. And also Lord Edward Fitzgerald's address to the citizens of Dublin. About this time Dr. Duigenan published a scurrilous and bitter answer to Mr. Grattan's address to his fellow-citizens of Dublin. Upon its appearance, Mr. Grattan wrote the following note to Dr. Duigenan :

“ Mr. Grattan has seen a very gross, a very unprovoked, and a very ludicrous performance written against him, and signed Patrick Duigenan.

1798. The new parliament met according to proclamation on the 9th of January, 1798: Mr. Foster was re-elected speaker: and on the 15th his excellency delivered a speech from the throne*. The Earl of Bective, in a maiden speech, disclaimed every idea of vexatious opposition; but he could not agree to that part of the address, which approved of the measures of administration. He reprobated the system of coercion, thought Ireland was only to be reclaimed by timely concession; and strongly recommended catholic emancipation and temperate reform. The chancellor, with great warmth insisted, that these objections were but catch-words for revolt and rebellion. What did the noble lord mean by using the phrase, "imparting to the Roman Catholic body the blessings of the constitution?" There was not a Roman Catholic in Ireland, to whom the benefits of its constitution were not

New Parlia-
ment meets.

* Mr. G. don't explain his public conduct to individuals.

"The statute-book and the journals of the house of commons are open.

"Were he to make his public conduct a subject of explanation, it would not be to such a person as Dr. D.

"But as the above mentioned attack mixes in its folly much personal rudeness, Mr. G. judges it not wholly beneath him to take some sort of notice of it; and he is sorry to be forced to observe, that the author has departed from the manners and language of a gentleman, and has thought proper to adopt a strain so false, so vile, and so disgusting, as to render Dr. D. a, too and ludicrous to give an affront, or to make an apology.

"Mr. Grattan remains in Dublin for three days, and is to be heard of at Kearn's hotel, Kildare-street."

* It may be seen, Hist. Rev. vol. II, p. 650.

1798.

extended as amply as to the noble lord, or any other peer, who heard him. The government of Ireland had, by measures necessarily strong, at length quieted that part of the country, in which the conspiracy originated. *These measures were, to his knowledge, extorted from the nobleman who governed that country:* they had been successful, and the state of the north at that day was a proof of their wisdom. The county (Limerick), from which he had lately returned, and which had formerly been a loyal, industrious county, was infested by emissaries from the north, exciting the peasantry to insurrection. Emancipation and reform were not the means, which they employed for the seduction of the peasant. The suppression of tythes, the abolition of taxes, and exemption from the payment of rent, were the rewards they promised. Emancipation and reform were only used to delude the better classes. The address was carried without a division. In the commons Mr. Smith moved, by way of amendment to the address, a clause to recommend such measures, as were likely to conciliate the people, and unite them against the common enemy. No serious opposition was attempted after the secession of the Whig party.

Various causes combined to force the union to an earlier issue, than was originally intended. Their Gallic friends had long neglected them, and gone by every opportunity of succouring them with effect. The activity of government had increased: the greatest and most respectable part of the population

Causes
bringing
forward the
Union.

1798.

of the kingdom had in their addresses given fresh pledges of their loyalty, and renounced and reprobated the now avowed principles of the union. The leaders, therefore, perceiving their party on the decline, resolved upon a desperate effort. In the month of February a military committee was appointed by the executive council of the rebels; detailed instructions were issued to the adjutant-generals; and thanks were voted to the several colonels for their assiduity in embodying and organizing the people. In the mean time, the Irish executive prepared a dispatch for the French Directory, pressing, in the most earnest terms, for the promised succours; but it was found impossible to convey it to France. In the months of February and March, many parts of Leinster and Munster were in the actual possession of the United Irishmen, and other parts were secretly under their controul. Nocturnal insurrections were frequent. The town of Cahir, in the county of Tipperary, was invested, in open day, by a party of 800 men, chiefly cavalry. They searched for arms, and evacuated it without further molestation. Murders and other atrocities drove many of the loyal inhabitants of the counties of Cork, Limerick, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Carlow, King's County, Queen's County, Kildare, and Wicklow, into garrison towns for safety.

Lord
Moir's
motion for
concilia-
tory mea-
sures in the
Irish Peers.

Earl Moira, on the 19th of February, submitted a motion to the Irish house of lords, for conciliatory measures. He travelled over the same ground as he had in the British house of peers. The chan-

cellor, in a speech of four hours, violently opposed the motion. With great assurance he asserted, that the system of government had been a system of conciliation; that in no place had the experiment been so fairly tried as in Ireland; in none had it so completely failed. He here passed some severe and indecent reflections on the respectable Bishop of Down, who had promoted a petition to his Majesty in favour of conciliatory measures. Lord Moira in reply admitted, that a conspiracy did exist, which he attributed to the severe and unconstitutional measures of government, particularly the fatal recal of Earl Eitzwilliam. The motion was negatived by a large majority. The parliament continued indeed to sit, and to do business; but so little interest did the public take in the debates, that the galleries were wholly deserted, and scarcely sufficient members attended to make up the house.

On the 27th of February, a motion of the chancellor of exchequer, for payment of 20,000*l.* to the college of Maynooth, was vehemently opposed by Dr. Duignan, who took that opportunity of inveighing with great bitterness against the character of Dr. Hussey, the catholic bishop of Waterford. This prelate had in the preceding year published a pastoral letter to his clergy, in which he exhorted them to attend to the spiritual duties of the flock committed to their care. He condemned the practice of catholic parents educating their children in the charter-schools, and catholic soldiers attending the protestant service at church. He stated the catholic body to constitute

1798.
Attack upon Dr. Hussey, the Catholic Bishop of Waterford.

1798.

nine-tenths of the nation at large, and ninety-nine in the hundred in his own diocese. His spirit of independence and freedom of language offended the castle, and alarmed some of the more timid of his brethren*.

Mr. Arthur
O'Connor,
Proprietor
and Editor
of the Press
Newspaper.

Towards the end of February, Mr. O'Donnel moved for a committee to enquire into the nature and tendency of a newspaper called *The Press*, which had been set up by the United Irishmen, in order to repair the loss they had sustained by the military demolition of the Northern Star; its intemperate language had subjected it to a prosecution; the publisher was imprisoned, and the paper in danger of being suppressed. In this crisis Mr. A. O'Connor announced himself the proprietor and editor. He had lately been elected member of the Irish Directory, in conjunction with Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Mr. Oliver Bond, Dr. M'Neven, and counsellor Emmet. Strong suspicions

* Few ecclesiastics ever possessed more extensive knowledge, profane and ecclesiastical, than Dr. Hussey. He had long enjoyed the good opinion and peculiar confidence of the British ministry, as well as the favor of several foreign courts, particularly that of Spain. Upon his first entrance into his pastoral function, his great object was to impress his flock with a dignified sense of their religion, and to establish a free, unchecked, and open exercise of it, after the legislature had given it toleration. He frequently officiated to the catholics in the militia regiments, which were encamped at Lehawinstown. he incurred much displeasure at the castle from having lodged a strong remonstrance against the punishments inflicted upon some catholic soldiers for having disobeyed orders, by refusing to attend the protestant service, when their regiments were ordered to church. The pastoral letter is to be seen in the Appendix to my Hist. Rev. No. CIX. together with some interesting letters of Mr. Edmund Burke to this prelate.

fell upon Mr. O'Connor, and also upon his brother. Mr. Roger O'Connor was apprehended, and lodged in Cork gaol, on a charge of high treason, from which he was liberated at the spring assizes, from a total want of evidence against him.

1798.

In the beginning of the year 1798, Mr. Arthur O'Connor came to England, with an intention, as it afterwards appeared, of proceeding to France, in conjunction with John Binns, a member of the London Corresponding Society, James Coigley, an Irish priest, and a person of the name of Allen. In the latter end of February they went to Margate, intending to hire a vessel to convey them to France. Some circumstances in their conduct exciting suspicion, they were all apprehended, and first committed prisoners to the tower, afterwards to Maidstone gaol. There they were tried by a special commission on the 21st and 22d of May, and all of them acquitted, except Coigley, on whom had been found a treasonable and most absurd paper, purporting to be an address from "the Secret Committee of England to the Executive Directory of France." Coigley was condemned and executed; and Mr. O'Connor and Binns, after their acquittal, were detained on another charge of treason. In the mean time, and in consequence of the motion of Mr. O'Donnel, an act had passed the Irish parliament, authorizing grand juries to present any newspapers, containing seditious or libellous matter, as a nuisance; and also authorizing the magistrates, on such presentation, to suppress the paper, and seize and destroy the printing materials,

Mr. Arthur
O'Connor
arrested,
tried, and
acquitted in
England.

1798.



&c. The paper called *The Press* was therefore suppressed, and some of its principal supporters taken into custody ; but no discovery of importance resulted from that transaction.

Orangemen
and De-
fenders
complained
of.

In the debates upon the abuses of the press, both the Defenders and Orangemen were alternately complained of by the opposite parties in parliament. Mr. Pelham assured the house, that no disturbances then existed between the Orangemen and the catholics. Both parties admitted, that they had been deceived by the United Irishmen. Neither the Orangemen nor Defenders deserved the epithet rebellious. That applied to the United Irishmen alone. On the 5th of March, 1798, Sir Lawrence Parsons brought forward his promised motion for a committee to enquire into the state of the country, and to suggest such measures as were likely to conciliate the popular mind. This was the longest and most interesting debate of the session. At five o'clock in the morning the house divided, when 19 voted for, and 156 against the motion.

Sir R. Aber-
crombie,
command-
er-in-chief.

In all the debates in parliament, whenever the abuses and outrages of the army were mentioned they were never contradicted, but palliated or justified by the treasury bench. They were the natural effusions of a loyal army in a rebel country. The courts of law were open to redress, and none should complain, who refused to seek it. Insulting solace! To remit cottagers, labourers, and farmers to the legal right, without the means of prosecuting either civilly or criminally. The British cabinet had most judiciously appointed the gal-

1798.

lant Sir Ralph Abercrombie commander-in-chief in Ireland, well knowing, that he would require the duties, without debasing the character of the soldier. Soon after his arrival he found himself under the necessity of publishing in general orders*, that the army was in a state of licentiousness, which rendered it formidable to every one but the enemy. The liberal and genuine spirit of the British soldier, so prominent on the face of these orders, was repugnant to the coercive system of the Irish ministry. The inflexible firmness of that gallant veteran was not to be subdued by extortion, fear, or adulation. Corrupt influence prevailed, and he was forced to resign. The effect of a principal part of Sir Ralph Abercrombie's orders was defeated by Mr. Pelham's letter of the 3d of March, 1798, in which he informs the officers, that his excellency authorized them to employ force against any persons assembled in arms, or not in arms, without waiting for the sanction of the civil authority, if in their opinion the peace of the realm, and the safety of his majesty's subjects might be endangered by waiting for such authority. The parliament in the mean-while prepared the money and some other pressing bills without opposition, which received the royal assent on the 24th of March.

The leaders of the Union were promised, that succours should be sent from France in April; but they never arrived. The French, indeed, confided so little in their new allies, that in all their communica-

France promises succours, and fails.

* The order bears date the 26th of February, 1798, and is to be found in my Hist. Rev. vol. II. p. 663.

1798.

tions they never informed the rebel directory of the place, where they meant to land, or (except in the first) the force they meant to bring. However, Messrs. O'Connor, M'Neven, and Emmett have observed in their memoir*, that the French never would abandon the plan of separating Ireland from England, so long as the discontents of the people would induce them to support an invasion. The resignation of General Abercrombie was the fatal moment of renovating and extending the reign of terrorism. Mr. Pelham† re-

* Memoir 23. There appears no well-founded reason for questioning the truth of that memorial, *Fas est et ab hoste doceri*. "Let us then (say they), whilst Ireland is yet our country, be indulged in a few remarks, which we deem extremely important to its future prosperity; now that we have given these full and faithful details of the past, we cannot be suspected of any but pure disinterested motives in what we are about to say, ere we leave it for ever. The parts we have acted have enabled us to gain the most intimate knowledge of the dispositions and hearts of our countrymen. From that knowledge we speak, when we declare our deepest conviction, that the penal laws, which have followed in such doleful and rapid succession, the house burnings, arbitrary imprisonments, and free quarters, and above all, the tortures to extort confessions, neither have had, nor can have, any other effect but exciting the most lively rancour in the hearts of almost all the people of Ireland, against those of their countrymen, who have had recourse to such measures for maintaining their power, and against the connexion with Great Britain, whose men, and whose aid had been poured in to assist them."

† In the Hist. Rev. vol. II. p. 667, it is stated, that Mr. Pelham (now Earl Chichester) had retired from office in disgust at the system. But the author has been assured, by authority from his lordship, that this was an erroneous statement: that he approved of the system and all the measures of government at that time; and was most re-

luctantly resigned his situation from ill health, and was succeeded by Lord Castlereagh, who brought with him into office full as much fervor for the system as his predecessor*.

1798.

luctantly compelled by a severe illness to withdraw his services in forwarding them.

* The system at this time (5th April, 1798,) has been thus strongly etched. (Pet. W. C. p. 12.) "Here we perceive and lament the effects of inveteracy, conceived by his Majesty's ministers against the Irish. *Irritable and quellable, devoted to superstition, deaf to law, and hostile to property*; such was the picture, which at different times his ministers in Ireland have painted of his people, with a latent view to flatter the English by the degradation of the Irish, and by such sycophantship and malice, they have persuaded themselves to consider their fellow subjects as a different species of human creature, fair objects of religious proscription and political incapacities, but not of moral relationship, or moral obligation; accordingly they have afforded indemnity for the rich, and new pains and penalties for the people; they have given felonious descriptions of his Majesty's subjects, and have easily persuaded themselves to exercise felonious practices against their lives and properties; they have become as barbarous as their system, and as savage as their own description of their countrymen and their equals; and now it seems they have communicated to the British minister, at once their deleterious maxims and their foul expressions, and he too indulges and wantons in villainous discourses against the people of Ireland, sounding the horrid trumpet of carnage and separation. Thus the language of the ministers becomes an encouragement to the army to murder the Irish.

"We leave these scenes; they are dreadful; a ministry in league with the abettors of the Orange-boys and at war with the people; a people unable to procure a hearing in either country, while the loquacity of their enemies besieges the throne."

1798.

New declarations and conduct of the Orangemen.

The readoption of the system of coercion was peculiarly congenial with the spirit of the Orange boys. Under the countenance of government they now assumed a tone of affording protection ; and in order to do away the odium they had incurred by their past conduct with the mass of people, who were Catholics, some of their leaders published an address strongly disclaiming all the imputations and charges of their enemies, and expressive of the most purified loyalty.* In this public fever the opposite parties availed themselves alternately of the advantage of misrepresenting their antagonists.

Mischievous effects of the Orange association.

The mischief of the association of Orangemen consisted in the principle of national disunion, which it essentially went to establish in perpetuity. They were all Protestants, and their regulations precluded the admission of Catholics among them. As they now avowed their sole object was to preserve public order, and make head against the United Irishmen and all other enemies to the state, the exclusion of the Catholics from their society was considered by the generality of the people (however it may have been really intended by the Orangemen) an indirect charge or open intimation, that the Catholics made common cause with the United Irishmen, and abetted those principles, to combat which the Orangemen professed to

* The form of their address is to be seen in Hist. Rev. vol. II. 670. It was signed, Thomas Verner, Edward Ball, John Claudius Beresford, William James, Isaac Dejoncourt,

have united. In fact where such a society exists, religious distinctions can never subside.*

1798.

Discovery
of the re-
bellion.

Notwithstanding the system were now pushed to unprecedented severity, the discovery of the designs of the conspirators was not the result of any measure of government. It was procured from the infidelity to their cause of one Thomas Reynolds, a silk-mercier of Dublin, and a Catholic, who had so completely wound himself into the confidence of Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Mr. Oliver Bond, that in the year 1797 he was appointed a colonel, then treasurer and representative of the county of Kildare, and at

* Notwithstanding the attempts to clear the principles of the Orange confederacy from the charges of cruelty, it is incontestable from the examination of Mr. O'Connor, that government had no doubt of their oath of extermination. (*Mem.* p. 52)

Committee. Government had nothing to do with the Orange system, nor their extermination.

O'Connor. You, my Lord (Castlereagh) from the station you fill, must be sensible, that the executive of any country has it in it's power to collect a vast mass of information, and you must know from the secret nature, and zeal of the union, that its executive must have the most minute information of every act in the Irish government. As one of the executive, it came to my knowledge, that considerable sums of money were expended throughout the nation, in endeavouring to extend the Orange system, and that the oath of extermination was administered; when these facts are coupled, not only with general impunity, which has been uniformly extended towards the acts of this infernal association, but the marked encouragement its members have received from government, I find it impossible to exculpate the government from being the parent and protector of these sworn extirpators.

1798.

last, delegate for the province of Leinster. This man having settled his terms with Mr. Cope, a Dublin merchant, and having received five hundred guineas in hand, gave information that the Leinster delegates were to meet at Mr. Oliver Bond's on the 12th of March, to concert measures for an immediate insurrection.

The Leinster Delegates and others arrested.

In consequence of this, Mr. Justice Swan, attended by twelve serjeants in coloured clothes, arrested the Leinster delegates, thirteen in number, while sitting in Mr. Bond's house. They seized several of their papers, which led to the full discovery of the intended insurrection: and on the same day Messrs. Emmett, M'Neven, Bond, Sweetman, Henry Jackson, and Hugh Jackson were taken into custody, and warrants were granted against Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Messrs. M'Cormick and Sampson, who having notice made their escape.

The Insurrection prematurely forced into explosion.

The leaders did not intend to bring forward the insurrection till the French should come to their assistance, and meant in the mean time to continue to increase their numbers, and to add to their stock of arms; but in the spring of 1798, the loyalty of the people was so strongly marked, that the chief conspirators perceiving their cause was losing ground, had no alternative but to hazard a general rising, or abandon their hopes. To prevent despondency amongst the members of the union on the occasion of this discovery and seizure, a hand-bill was circulated with industry, and had considerable effect in keeping

1798.

up their spirits*. Upon the seizure of the delegates a new directory was chosen, which soon experienced the fate of the former. Their proceedings were disclosed by another informer; a Captain Armstrong, of the King's County Militia, who had pretended to en-

* In order to shew the feelings, confidence, and resolution of the rebels at this period the form of this hand-bill is given. " For us the
" keen but momentary anxiety occasioned by the situation of our
" invaluable friends, subsided, on learning all the circumstances
" of the case, into a calm tranquillity, a consoling conviction of
" mind, that they are as safe as innocence can make them now;
" and to these sentiments were quickly added a redoubled energy,
" a ten-fold activity of exertion, which has already produced the
" happiest effects. The organization of the capital is perfect. No
" vacancies existing, arrangements have been made, and are still
" making, to secure for our oppressed brethren, whose trials ap-
" proach, the benefit of legal defence, and the centinels, whom
" you have appointed to watch over your interests, stand firm at
" their posts, vigilant of events, and prompt to give you notice
" and advice, which, on every occasion at all requiring it, rely on
" receiving. This recital, Irishmen, is meant to guard those of
" you, who are remote from the scene of the late events, against
" the consequences of misrepresentation and mistake. The
" most unfounded rumours have been set afloat, fabricated
" for the double purpose of delusion and intimidation. Your
" enemies talk of treachery, in the vain and fallacious hope of
" creating it; but you, who scorn equally to be their dupes or
" their slaves, will meet their forgeries with dignified contempt,
" incapable of being either goaded into untimely violence, or
" sunk into pusillanimous despondency. Be firm, Irishmen,—
" but be cool and cautious; be patient yet a while; trust to no
" unauthorized communication; and above all, we warn you—
" again and again we warn you—against doing the work of your
" tyrants, by premature, by partial, or divided exertion. If Ireland
" shall be forced to throw away the scabbard, let it be at her own
" time, not their's."

1798.



General
proclama-
tion and
free quar-
terings, and
military ex-
ecution.

ter into the conspiracy with the intention of discovering their schemes to government *.

A proclamation† was published on the 30th of March announcing the existence of a conspiracy against the government, and declaring, that orders had been issued, commanding the officers of his majesty's forces to employ the most summary and effectual measures for the immediate suppression of that conspiracy, and for disarming the rebels and all disaffected persons. On the 3d of April, a manifesto, from the general's head-quarters addressed to the inhabitants of Kildare, required them to surrender their arms in the space of ten days, threatening, in case of non-compliance, to distribute large bodies of troops among them to live at free quarters, promising rewards to such, as would give information of concealed arms or amunition, and denouncing further severities if the county should still continue in a disturbed state. On the advance of the military into each county, the like notice was given, and at the expiration of the ten days, the troops were quartered on the houses of the disaffected or suspected, in numbers proportioned to the supposed guilt and ability of the owners. Numbers of houses, with their furniture, were burned, in

* It shews the inflexible determination, with which the united Irishmen entered into the conspiracy, that out of the whole number Reynolds the informer should alone have betrayed them. Armstrong was not properly an united Irishman, having only taken the oath for the purpose of discovery.

† 17 Journ. Com. DCCCCXI.

1798.

which concealed arms had been found, in which meetings of the union had been holden, or whose occupants had been guilty of the fabrication of pikes, or had been suspected of other practices for the promotion of the conspiracy. Numbers were daily scourged, picketed, or otherwise put to pain, to force confessions of concealed arms or plots. Outrageous acts of severity were often committed by persons not in the regular troops. Men imprisoned on suspicion or private information were sometimes half-hanged, or strangled almost to death, before their guilt or innocence could be ascertained by trial. Persons, who wore their hair short, or happened to have any part of their apparel of a green colour, were considered as displaying emblems of republicanism. The term *croppy* was adopted to signify a revolutionist. A most barbarous practice prevailed of applying arbitrarily to the head of any person wearing a short head of hair, caps of coarse linen or strong brown paper, smeared with pitch on the inside, which in some instances adhered so firmly as not to be disengaged without laceration of the hair and skin. The united party retaliated in some measure by seizing and cropping the hair of such as they wished to render liable to the application of the pitched cap. Various other violent acts were committed, and the best members of society often suffered these military outrages from intemperate or affected zeal, secret accusation, and private malice. For both Magistrates and military officers were empowered to receive informations, to keep the names of the informers profoundly secret, and

1798.

proceed against the accused according to their discretion. A Mr. Wright was seized at Clonmel by Mr. T. Judkin Fitzgerald, and flagellated almost to death by receiving 500 lashes, merely for having in his pocket a letter written in the French language, upon an indifferent subject. He afterwards recovered 500*l.* in an action. The matter was brought before parliament, as will be hereafter noticed. Many such actions would have been brought had not parliament passed an act to indemnify magistrates and officers from all errors or excesses committed by them under color of public service.

Catholic
Declara-
tion.

As the conspiracy gained ground and publicity, some of the leading catholics thought, that an act of the body should go forth to the public, expressive of their abhorrence of it, and with a view to recall such of their religious persuasion, as had been deluded into the conspiracy against the government. Accordingly, on the 6th of May, Lords Fingall, Gormanstown, Southwell, Kenmare, Sir Edward Bellew, 41 gentlemen and professors of divinity, and the president of the college of Maynooth, published a declaration* under their signatures, as a protest against any imputation of their bodies abetting and favoring rebellion and treason.

Discovery
and Arrest
of Lord Ed-
ward Fitz-
gerald.

Although the government had been some time in possession, through the information of Reynolds and Armstrong, of all the particulars of the conspiracy, they had hitherto encouraged its progress, in order,

* The declaration is to be seen, Hist. Rev. vol. II. p. 679.

1798.

as it has been boasted of by their confidential servants, that the suppression of it might be effected with more eclat and terror*. As the expected explosion however now drew so near, it was found necessary to arrest more of the principal conspirators, who might give directions, energy, and effect to the insurrection. Lord Edward Fitzgerald had absconded since the 12th of March; and on the 19th of May was lodged in the house of one Murphy, a featherman in Thomas-street. Thither Major Sirr, attended by Captain Swan, of the revenue corps, and Captain Ryan, of the Sepulchre's, and eight soldiers disguised, repaired in coaches. While they were posting the soldiers in such a manner, as to prevent the possibility of an escape, Captain Swan perceiving a woman running hastily upstairs, for the purpose, as he supposed, of alarming Lord Edward, followed her with the utmost speed; and, on entering an apartment, found Lord Edward lying on a bed, in his dressing jacket. He approached the bed, and informed his lordship, that he had a warrant against him, and that resistance would be vain; assuring him at the same time, that he would treat him with the utmost respect. Lord Edward sprang from the bed, and snapped a pistol, which missed fire, at Captain Swan: he then closed with him, drew a dagger, gave him a wound in the hand, and different wounds in his body; one of them under the ribs was deep and dangerous, and bled most copiously. At that mo-

* Quere! To what chapter of Ethics is to be placed the political morality of encouraging crimes and bloodshed?

1798.

ment Captain Ryan entered, and missed fire at Lord Edward with a pocket pistol; on which he made a lunge at him with a sword cane, which bent on his ribs; but affected him so much, that he threw himself on the bed, and Captain Ryan closing with him, a violent scuffle ensued, during which Lord Edward plunged the dagger into his side. They then fell on the ground, where Captain Ryan received many desperate wounds; one of which, in the lower part of his belly, was so large, that his bowels fell out on the floor. Major Sirr having entered the room, saw Captain Swan bleeding, and Lord Edward advancing towards the door, while Captain Ryan weltering in blood on the floor, was holding him by one leg, and Captain Swan by the other; he therefore fired at Lord Edward with a pistol, and wounded him in the shoulder, on which he cried out for mercy, and surrendered himself. His lordship was then conveyed to the castle. Some attempts to rescue him were defeated by the arrival of the guards. On the 19th and 21st of May, other arrests were made. Patrick Byrne, the bookseller, and Messrs. Sheares, brothers, both barristers, and much loved and respected by the profession, were committed for high treason. In their house was found a proclamation*, intended to have been published on the morning after the projected insurrection should have taken place. The severe measures† to which government had lately had recourse, ex-

* It is given in the *Historical Review*, vol. II. p. 683.

† Gordon's *History of the Rebellion*, p. 66.

cited a spirit of revenge and cruelty in the insurgents, which the former members of the directory had not*.

1798.

* The examination of Mr. Emmett before the committee of the lords throws the true light upon this matter. 17 Com. Journ. DCCCCIX.

Question. Was John Sheares a member of the executive before your arrest?

Answer. He was not. Says the old executive never meant to spill blood, but rather to retain men of a certain rank as hostages; and if they found them hostile to the new government, to send them out of the country. That it was also determined, that if the wives of such persons did not act with hostility to the new government, they should be allowed a maintenance out of the husband's property, and that each child should have a portion, the residue to belong to the nation."

The before-mentioned memoir gives a more enlarged account. *Mem. p. 31.*

Lord Dillon. Mr. Emmett, you have stated the views of the executive to be very liberal and very enlightened, and I believe your's were so; but let me ask you, whether it was not intended to cut off (in the beginning of the contest) the leaders of the opposition party, by a summary mode, such as assassination: my reason for asking you is, John Sheares's proclamation, the most terrible paper that ever appeared in any country: it says, that 'many of your tyrants have bled, and others must bleed,' &c.

Emmett. My lords, as to Mr. Sheares's proclamation, he was not of the executive when I was.

Lord Chancellor. He was of the new executive.

Emmett. I do not know he was of any executive, except from what your lordship says; but I believe he was joined with some others in framing a particular plan of insurrection for Dublin and its neighbourhood: neither do I know what value he annexed to those words in his proclamation: but I can answer, that while I was of the executive, there was no such design, but the contrary; for we conceived when one of you lost your lives we lost an hostage. Our intention was to seize you all, and keep you as

1798.

Insurrec-
tion form-
ally an-
nounced to
Parliament.

On the 21st of May, Lord Castlereagh, by direction of the lord-lieutenant, wrote to the lord mayor, to acquaint him, "That his excellency had discovered, that the disaffected in the city and neighbourhood of Dublin, had formed a plan of possessing themselves, in the course of the present week, of the metropolis, and of seizing the executive government, and those in authority within the city." On the 22d of

hostages, for the conduct of England; and after the revolution was over, if you could not live under the new government, to send you out of the country. I will add one thing more, which though it is not an answer to your question, you may have a curiosity to hear. In such a struggle it was natural to expect confiscations: our intention was, that every wife who had not instigated her husband to resistance should be provided for out of the property, notwithstanding confiscations; and every child, who was too young to be his own master, or form his own opinion, was to have a child's portion. Your lordships will now judge how far we intended to be cruel.

"*Lord Chancellor.* Pray Mr. Emmett, what caused the late insurrection?"

"*Emmett.* The free quarters, the house burnings, the tortures, and the military executions, in the counties of Kildare, Carlow, and Wicklow.

"*Lord Chancellor.* Don't you think the arrests of the 12th of March caused it?"

"*Emmett.* No: but I believe if it had not been for these arrests it would not have taken place; for the people, irritated by what they had suffered, had been long pressing the executive to consent to an insurrection, but they had resisted or eluded it, and even determined to persevere in the same line: after these arrests, however, other persons came forward, who were irritated, and thought differently, who consented to let that partial insurrection take place."

1798.

May, his lordship presented a message to the House of Commons, from his excellency, to the like effect; and that in consequence he had taken such precautions, that he doubted not the designs of the rebellious would be effectually defeated. The House voted an address expressive of their horror and indignation, and of their determined resolution and energy to support government. The speaker and all the members immediately waited on his excellency with the address; and to shew their zeal, and to increase the solemnity of the proceeding, they walked through the streets on foot, two and two, preceded by the speaker, the serjeant at arms, and all the officers of the house.

Notwithstanding by the late discoveries and seizures, the rebels were left without heads to plan, or officers to execute their designs, yet it was impossible to suppress the volcano from the eruption, which had been long settled for the 23d of May. On that day Mr. Nelson and some other leading conspirators were arrested; the city and county of Dublin were proclaimed; the guards at the castle were trebled, and the whole city converted into a besieged garrison. The northern and Connaught mail-coaches were stopped, which was a preconcerted signal of insurrection; and, about twelve o'clock on the morning of the 24th, a body of rebels attacked the town and jail of Naas, where Lord Gosford commanded. As the guard had been seasonably increased, in expectation of such an attack, the assailants were repulsed, and driven into a narrow avenue, where, without order or discipline, they sustained for some time the

Breaking
out of the
rebellion.

1798.

attack of the Armagh militia, and Sir Watkins William Wynne's fencible corps of Ancient Britons. The king's troops admitted, that they lost two officers and about thirty men; and the rebels were reported to have lost 140 in the contest and their flight. They were dispersed, and several of them taken prisoners*. On the same day, a small division of his majesty's forces was surprized at the town of Prosperous; and a detachment at the village of Clane cut their way to Naas, with considerable loss. About the same time, General Dundas encountered a large body of insurgents on the hills near Kilcullin, and 130 of them were left dead upon the field. On the following day, about 400 rebels, under the command of Ledwich and Keough, were defeated near Cloudalkin by a party of dragoons under Lord Roden. Their leaders were taken, immediately tried by a court-martial, and executed, having pleaded in vain, that they had been forced into the service. These failures on behalf of the rebels did not damp their sanguine hopes of future success: so deeply rooted was their

* Throughout the rebellion, it was the unfair and mischievous practice of government to exaggerate the losses, and misrepresent the conduct of the rebels. On this occasion not more than nine or ten rebels fell; but in three or four hours after, 57 of a crowd in the street were killed and many of them were shot when escaping from their huts, which were set on fire. Others were taken out of their houses, and instantly hanged in the street. Such was the brutal ferocity of some of the king's troops, that they half roasted, and eat of the flesh of one man (by the name of Walsh) who had not been in arms. See a verified detail of the conduct of the king's troops at Naas. *Hist. Rev.* vol. III. p. 708.

hatred of the government, by which they felt themselves oppressed. 1798.

General Lake, who, upon the resignation of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, had been appointed commander in chief, published on the 24th of May, a notice that he should exert in the most summary manner the powers entrusted * to him for suppressing the rebellion; and that all persons in anywise aiding or assisting therein, would be treated as rebels, and punished accordingly; and required all the inhabitants of the city of Dublin, with certain exceptions, to remain within their respective dwellings from nine o'clock at night till five in the morning, under pain of punishment. On the same morning also, for better securing the peace of the city, the lord mayor published a proclamation for delivering in a list of their registered arms, and for delivering up all arms not registered. These measures of government so far appeased the turbulency of the insurgents, and tranquillized the metropolis, that the House of Commons uninterruptedly went through the business of the day. Lord Castlereagh communicated to them the lord-lieutenant's proclamation, and an address was resolved upon, to express their approbation of his excellency's measure. Colonel Maxwell proposed the instant military execution of the principal fomenters and leaders of the rebellion then in confinement, in order to cut off all expectation of rescuing them at a future day. This was opposed by Lord Castle-

Cautionary
measures of
Govern-
ment.

* *i. e.* By the Lord Lieutenant's proclamation of that morning.

1798.



reagh, who moved an adjournment to that day se'n-night.

Progress of
the rebel-
lion discon-
certed.

The vigilance of government within the capital kept such of the conspirators from rising, as remained in the city ; and the seizure of so many of their leaders prevented any concert or command, and consequently effect in their movements. The country was in the mean time beset in every direction for twenty or thirty miles around with detached bands of this undisciplined rabble, acting for the most part half armed, and without plan or command. They generally awaited the signal, which they expected, of the castle, the barracks, and the whole city of Dublin, being in their possession. It was a melancholy proof of the progress of rebellion, that every person almost without distinction, in and about Dublin, whose situation in life placed him in the occasion of retaining any number of men either as servants, artificers, workmen, or labourers, was suddenly left and abandoned by those persons attending their respective posts for the general rising. An awful lesson of the power of combination in a people at first linked together upon fair and avowed principles, then cemented by a common cause of grievance, and at last goaded into revenge and despair by unnecessary severity, or unwarrantable cruelty. These notorious circumstances loudly acquit the United Irishmen of the base charge of systematic assassination. Had such been their design, admission into families must have been their first object : yet scarcely was there a family of consequence throughout the na-

1798.

tion, in which several sworn members of the union were not to be found. War having now been openly commenced by the rebels, government increased their coercion. Although no public act sanctioned the picketings, stranglings, floggings, and torturings to extort confessions, yet under the very eye of government, and with more than their tacit permission, were these outrages practised, in breach of the constitution, and in defiance of humanity and policy. Even to this hour is that conduct of the Irish Government not only defended and justified, but panegyricized by the advocates and creatures* of the infuriate drivers of that system of terrorism. In Beresford's Riding House, Sandy's Prevot, the Old Custom House, the Royal Exchange, some of the barracks, and other places in Dublin, there were daily, hourly exhibitions of these torturings; as there also were in almost every town, village, or hamlet throughout the kingdom, in which troops were quartered.

* Amongst such creatures is to be reckoned Sir Richard Musgrave, who has loaded a heavy quarto volume of memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland, with the most offensive calumnies, notorious falsehoods, and wicked provocations to disturbance. Lord Cornwallis, on this account, indignantly disclaimed the acceptance of the dedication of so scandalous and mischievous a work. This systematic traducer of the Irish nation has had the exclusive assurance to publish a laboured defence of the torture to extract confessions, and the self-convicting stupidity of asserting that *this practice never was sanctioned by Government; as they on the contrary used their utmost endeavours to prevent it, and the evidence extorted from the person whipped never was used to convict any person!!!*

1798.

Progress of
the rebel-
lion.

Several unsuccessful attacks were made by the rebels on the 24th of May, namely, on Carlow, Hacketstown, and Monastereven. They succeeded no better in the skirmishes near Rathfarnham, Tallagh, Lucan, Luske, Collon, and Baltinglass : but at Dunboyne and Barretstown, they had the advantage. The body, amounting to more than a thousand, which attacked Carlow, having assembled to exercise on the lawn before the house of Sir Edward Crosbie, a mile and a half distant from the town, marched thence into the town in an unmilitary and tumultuary manner, shouting, as they rushed in with vain confidence, that the town was their own ; but the destructive fire from the garrison forced them to recoil ; and finding their flight intercepted, numbers took refuge in the houses, which were immediately fired by the soldiery. About eighty houses, with some hundred men were consumed in this conflagration. Not a man of the king's troops was even wounded. After the defeat, executions instantly commenced ; and about two hundred in a short time were hanged or shot, according to martial law. Among the victims on this occasion was Sir Edward Crosbie, who had not accompanied the insurgents in their march, nor had ever swerved from his allegiance ; he was condemned and shot as an United Irishman. In the attack upon Slane, several of the assailants appeared dressed in the uniforms of the Cork militia and Ancient Britons ; which appearance, in this and some other instances, proved a fatal deceit

to the king's troops. They were the spoils taken at Prosperous; at which place the success of the rebels, amongst other causes, was owing to their having been headed or led on to the attack by an officer *; as their defeats in most other places, with immense superiority of numbers, were to be attributed to the want of some intelligent person to controul and direct them. Their discomfitures in general were not the effect of fear, but of want of discipline.

It was acknowledged by prisoners taken at Naas, and it appeared by written directions found in the pockets of the slain and wounded, that their orders were to put to death every officer, lists of whom were written upon these papers; then to disarm such of the soldiery, as would not instantly join them, and reserve them for further deliberation, presuming, that their cooler reflection would bring them over to their cause. These sanguinary orders providentially failed at Naas, but too fatally succeeded at Prosperous and elsewhere, from want of timely information of the intent of the rebels. Government had neglected to send to the different posts (they knew of each intended attack): this omission was the cause of much blood having been spilled on the fatal night of the 23d of May, and tended to render the contest more ferocious and cruel on both sides. Not only was

1798,

Bloody
measures of
the rebels.

* This officer was Dr. Esmond, who was lieutenant in the Clane cavalry, commanded by Capt. Griffith. He contrived on the next morning to appear on parade with his corps: whence he was taken into arrest, and afterwards regularly tried and executed at Dublin.

1798.

quarter refused to all rebels, who had arms in their hands, but many others were put to death, who had given no symptoms of disaffection; and after the heat of battle others were coolly executed without any form of trial whatever*.

Declaration
of the Ca-
tholics.

The chief of the Catholics in and about Dublin†, exerted their utmost endeavours to assert the unshaken loyalty of themselves and the respectable part of their body, against the malevolent attempts of their enemies to fasten the guilt of rebellion upon the whole Catholic body, and to render the present disastrous contest more bloody and ferocious by throwing in the deadly venom of religious acrimony.

Contest be-
comes more
ferocious on
both sides.

Notwithstanding this laudable endeavour, the contest on both sides became henceforth more sanguinary and ferocious by the arts and exertions of the leaders of each party. The Catholics' long sufferings under the penal code, and the recent provocations, which

* Instances of this are to be seen in Hist. Rev. vol. III. p. 699.

† On the 24th of May the following notice was given in the Dublin Journal and other papers. "*Roman Catholics*. An address to the lord-lieutenant, intended to be immediately presented, and containing a declaration of political principles applicable to the circumstances of the present moment, lies, for signature, at Fitzpatrick's, bookseller, Ormond-quay; at the Earl of Fingal's, Great George's-street, Rutland's square; Lord Viscount Kenmare's, Great George's street; Malachy Donelan's, Esq. Mountjoy's-square; and Counsellor Bellew's, No. 6, Upper Gardiner's-street, Mountjoy's-square. All signatures must be given in on or before Saturday next."

Two addresses to the lord-lieutenant from the Roman Catholics, are to be seen in Appendix to Hist. Rev. No. CX.

1798.

they had received from the picketings, whippings, half-hangings, burnings, ravishings, and free-quarters of the army, all operated to enflame the Irish against those, whom they in their native language called Sasanagh, which * meant indifferently English or protestants, and to which idea it was lamentably true, that recent circumstances prompted them to annex the most odious and sanguinary epithets. On the other hand every fiction, exaggeration, and obloquy of popish superstition, popish massacres, and popish cruelty, perfidy, and inhumanity, were eagerly collected, improved upon, and circulated through the ranks to deaden humanity, and stimulate the ferocity of the troops. The military executions, which generally

* The answer of Dr. M'Neven to the Archbishop of Cashel, in the secret committee of the lords, elucidates and confirms this statement. *Mem. p. 71.*

“ Archbishop of Cashel. Can you account for the massacres committed upon the protestants by the papists in the county of Wexford ?

“ M'Neven. My lord, I am far from being the apologist of massacres, however provoked : but if I am rightly informed as to the conduct of the magistrates of that county, the massacres you allude to were acts of retaliation upon enemies, much more than fanaticism : moreover, my lord, it has been the misfortune of this country, scarcely ever to have known the English natives or settlers, otherwise than enemies ; and in his language the Irish peasant has but one name for protestant and Englishman, and confounds them ; he calls both by the name of Sasanagh ; his conversation therefore is less against a religionist than against a foe ; his prejudice is the effect of the ignorance he is kept in, and the treatment he receives : how can we be surprized at it, when so much pains are taken to brutalize him ?

“ Lord Chancellor. I agree with Dr. M'Neven.”

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took place immediately after the engagements with the insurgents, greatly irritated them, and necessarily therefore increased their ferocity. Wherever any rebels appeared in arms, an immediate attack and general pursuit usually ensued : in which none was spared. The real rebels generally escaped, and the slaughter fell on the disarmed multitude, who fled from fear and consternation. This indiscriminate butchery of the unarmed fugitives, upon the approach of the king's troops, swelled the numbers of insurgents, and gave some truth to the government reports of the slain.

Rebels defeated at Tarah.

The most serious defeat of the rebels hitherto was on the 26th of May. A body of three or four thousand had taken post on the hill of Tarah, where they were attacked and defeated by three companies of the regiment of Reay fencibles ; Lord Fingal's troop of yeoman cavalry ; those of Captain Preston and Lower Kells : and Captain Molloy's company of yeoman infantry. Lord Fingall's Troop led on and bore the brunt of the attack. This defeat of the rebels at Tarah disconcerted their design of falling upon Trim and Naas, and laying open the communication of the metropolis with the northern parts of the kingdom.

More outrages committed by the troops, than the rebels.

By the vigilance of government, the interior of Dublin was kept quiet : the province of Ulster had not stirred : but so beset were all the roads and communications to and with the metropolis, that it had the appearance of a besieged city. The mail-coaches had ceased to run, and nothing could move with safety on the road without a strong military escort. It would be painful to wade through the particular instances of

outrage and barbarity committed during this rebellion, in burning, plundering, maiming, torturing, ravishing, and murdering. These barbarities were generally practised reciprocally: although more cold blood was shed, more property destroyed, more houses burned, and more women abused * by the troops, than by the insurgents: Yet more moderation and restraint were to be expected from disciplined troops, than from a lawless multitude in open rebellion.

Discouraged by defeats, some of the rebels began to wish for leave to retire in safety to their homes, and resume their peaceful occupations. On the 28th, General Dundas received a message from a rebel chief named Perkins, commanding 2000 men, posted on an eminence near the Curragh, that his men would surrender their arms, on condition of their being permitted to return unmolested to their habitations, and of the liberation of Perkins' brother from the jail of Naas. The general sent for advice to Dublin Castle, and received permission to assent to the terms; on the 31st, he received the personal surrender of Perkins, with some few of his associates, the rest dispersing homeward in all directions with shouts of joy, having left thirteen cart-loads of pikes behind. Three days after, Major General Sir James Duffe, who commanded a corps of six hundred men, received intelligence

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Some of the
rebels
submit.

* As to this species of outrage, it is universally allowed to have been exclusively on the side of the military. Even Sir Richard Musgrave admits, (p. 429) that "on most occasions the insurgents did not offer any violence to the tender sex."

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that a large body of men had assembled at a place called Gibbet-rath, on the Curragh, for the purpose of effecting the surrender, to which they had been admitted by General Dundas. Unfortunately, as the troops advanced near the insurgents to receive their surrendered weapons, one of the latter foolishly swearing that he would not deliver his gun otherwise than empty, discharged it with the muzzle upwards. The soldiers instantly considering this as an act of hostility, fired on the unresisting multitude, who fled with the utmost precipitation, and were pursued with slaughter by a company of fencible cavalry, denominated Lord Jocelyn's fox-hunters. Above two hundred of the insurgents fell upon this occasion; and a far greater number would have shared their fate, if a retreat had not been sounded with all possible dispatch, agreeably to the instructions of General Dundas.

Extension
of the re-
bellion not-
withstand-
ing defeats.

The rebellion, notwithstanding the many and severe defeats of the insurgents, spread itself in all directions, and particularly to the south. Almost the whole of the county of Kildare was in open rebellion. Hitherto, notwithstanding the attempts of too many persons in high situations to identify the terms rebel and papist, it had not yet become absolutely a religious contest. Almost all the chiefs and leaders of the rebels were protestants, though the greater part of the individuals concerned in it were catholics; that being the religion of the lower orders of the people. The great and prevailing distinction hitherto acted upon, was that of Orangemen and United Irishmen: the respective

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emblems of which were orange and green cockades*. Whilst rebellion raged about the metropolis and to the southward, the north, which had heretofore been considered the hot-bed of disaffection was perfectly quiet: here both dissenters and catholics were prominent in conveying to government the strongest sentiments of loyalty and zeal for preserving the constitution against external and internal foes†. Insurrection now burst out in a part‡ where it was least expected, and was growing into such formidable force, as to occasion the most serious alarms for the safety of government. The county of Wexford had been but very recently

* At Enniscorthy on the 28th of May, so fluctuating for some time was the success of the day, that to avoid the fury of each prevailing party in turn, persons alternately hoisted the orange and the green ribbon. (Gordon 94). Sir Richard Musgrave has amongst his numerous falsities antruly asserted, that the rebels spared catholics' houses, property, and persons, and confined their outrages to protestants. On the contrary they were furious against some catholic clergymen, who strongly opposed their principles and reprobated their conduct: they termed them Orange priests. It is not true, as Sir R. Musgrave states, (p. 315,) that "all the protestant houses from Baltinglass to Hacketstown, Rathdrum and Blessington were burned; but that the property of a Roman Catholic did not receive the smallest injury in that extensive tract." The property of protestants and catholics was plundered indiscriminately by the rebels. The Rev. Mr. Devoy, the Rev. Richard Doyle, Mr. Cullen, and many other catholics recovered compensation for their houses and property destroyed there by the rebels.

† Amongst many such addresses a sample is given of both in the Appendix to Historical Review, N^o. CXI.

‡ Gordon, p. 86.

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and but partially organized, and many of its Roman Catholic inhabitants had addressed the lord-lieutenant through the medium of the Earl Mountnorris, protesting their loyalty, and pledging themselves to arm, if permitted, in defence of government, whenever there should be occasion. Not above six hundred of the regular army or militia were stationed in the county, the defence of which was almost abandoned to the yeomen and their supplementaries, while the magistrates in the several districts were overzealously * employed in ordering the seizure, imprison-

* In illustration of the nature of that system, which Lord Clare, its grand projector and supporter, boasted had been extorted from Lord Camden, we select one out of numerous examples, which took place in the country, in which his lordship's property and influence principally lay. Every incident of it has been or can be verified upon oath.

Mr. Francis Arthur was an eminent merchant at Limerick. When the French attempted to land at Bantry, under the direction of General Smith, he raised and trained at great expense a corps of yeomen artillery, of which he had ever since had the command. The corps was disbanded on the 15th of May, 1798, without any alleged reason or previous notice. On Thursday the 24th of May, when the accounts arrived at Limerick, of the rebellion having broken out on the preceding day in Kildare, a gentleman in Mr. Arthur's hearing observed, that it was fortunate, the spirit of rebellion had not reached Limerick. *That is not the case*, remarked Colonel Cockell. *On Tuesday next, persons will be taken up, which will astonish the public.* On the intermediate Saturday (26th May) Captain Liddell superintending a flagellation at Limerick, took that opportunity of proclaiming 200 guineas reward for any person, who would inform against any of the artillery corps. On Tuesday the 29th, according to Colonel Cockell's prediction, Mr. Francis Arthur was apprehended in his own

ment, and whipping of numbers of suspected persons :
these yeomen, being protestants, and mostly Orange- 1798.

house by the recorder of Limerick, under an order from General Morrison. All his keys, papers, and property were seized, and his wife and family driven out of the house, which was immediately filled with soldiers. Mr. Arthur was conducted to prison by the sheriff, General Morrison, and a large party of horse and foot, without any warrant, Limerick not being then proclaimed, and confined to a small garret, out of the window of which if he looked, the centinel had orders to fire at him. The weather was sultry, and Mr. Arthur was refused permission to break a pane of the window for admission of air. He applied for leave to be visited by Mr. Thwaytes, a medical gentleman in the staff : it was refused. Mrs. Arthur sent her servant with some whey to her husband : the servant was recognized by Mr. Sheriff Lloyd, and sent home after a severe beating. All the information he could acquire from Colonel Cockell was, that he was charged by a person who had never seen him : it was uncertain, whether he would be tried at Limerick or Dublin, but that no counsel would be allowed him. After languishing in his cell, under severe illness, debarred from the use of pen, ink, and paper, and all human intercourse but the turnkey for above three weeks, on the 23d day of June, at nine o'clock at night, he received notice, that he was to appear on the next morning to take his trial. Then for the first time, the President informed Mr. Arthur, that he stood charged with having aided and assisted the rebellion. 1^o. By offering money for the use of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, after notice of his rebellious purposes. 2^o. Employing one Higgins to raise men in the west. 3^o. Having firelocks and pikes concealed in hogsheads. The only witness brought to substantiate the first charge was William Maume, a low person then actually under conviction and sentence of transportation for life to Botany Bay, for treasonable practices. In his progress to Waterford for this purpose, he was stopped by an order of government, and immediately taken into the protection and management of Mr. Thomas Judkin Fitzgerald, sheriff of Tipperary, and Colonel Foster of

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men, acted with a spirit ill fitted to allay religious hatred, or reclaim the disaffected. To excite irrita-

the Louth militia. Maume from his arrival at Limerick, was handsomely maintained and permitted to go at large. His evidence was prevaricating and inconsistent. The two witnesses to the 2d and 3d charges, having nothing but hearsay evidence to offer, and declaring their utter ignorance of Mr. Arthur, made no impression on the court. The court declared the prosecution closed on Saturday, and ordered the prisoner back to his confinement under a double guard, with orders to prepare for his defence on the Monday; but he was not allowed in the intermediate time to speak or communicate with any human being, not even the turnkey. On Sunday the prisoner was visited by Colonel Cockell, who refused his pressing entreaties for an extension of time, and the means of aid, assistance, or counsel. On the opening of the court on Monday morning, Maume was called in by the President, who without any suggestion, told the court, that Maume was now cooler and would correct his evidence of Saturday. He was called in, and prevaricated still deeper. And when a letter written by himself to Mr. Peppard, was produced, acknowledging he had never seen Mr. Arthur in his life, he answered in confusion to the President, *You know, Sir, that it was but lately that I gave information against Mr. Arthur, and that I did not wish to do it.* Between the close of the prosecution on Saturday and the opening of the defence on Monday, Mrs. Arthur and her friends procured some material witnesses from Charleville and other places; and ten of his witnesses, all respectable inhabitants of Limerick, had engaged a room in the hotel, adjoining to the court-house, to be at hand to answer the call of the court. The Rev. Avril Hill gave in a paper to the President, and the court declared there was a revolutionary committee sitting in the adjoining tavern: on which the Judge Advocate was dispatched to take them into custody. Centinels were placed in the front and rear of the house, with orders to let none escape till the breaking up of the court. They seized all the papers and written documents, which had been procured for the prisoners, and they were kept by the

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tion by floggings, stranglings, imprisonments, and a variety of insults, more especially without redundant

President. Mr. Sheriff Lloyd complained that some other of the prisoner's witnesses were in waiting, and issued orders that all papers and communications relating to the prisoner should be first given into court. All Mr. Arthur's friends were forcibly kept out of court; and with the utmost difficulty, some of the first characters in Limerick prevailed on the sheriff to permit Mr. Arthur's father to be present at the trial of his son. The greatest part of Mr. Arthur's witnesses having been kept out of court, the defence was closed on the same day. The prisoner was remanded, and a sentinel with a drawn bayonet quartered upon him in his narrow cell. His trunks also were taken from him. At nine o'clock on that night, Colonel Cockell brought him the following sentence of the court-martial. *You are to be transported to Botany Bay for life, to be sent off to-morrow morning at six o'clock, to pay a fine of 5000*l.* to the King forthwith, or your entire property will be confiscated.* When the trial was over Mr. Arthur's witnesses, who had not been examined, were called in, and severely rebuked by the President as a revolutionary committee. Hare, a permanent sergeant, who had received Maume into his care and management, and who had deposed that Maume had written the letter from General Morrison's apartments to Mr. Peppard, which the sheriff declared had saved Mr. Arthur's life, was committed to jail without any charge or warrant, and on the next morning was tried and found guilty by the same court-martial of a breach of trust, in having permitted Maume to write that letter to Mr. Peppard. As Mr. Sheriff Lloyd was conducting Hare to prison, to which he was committed as well as dismissed from the office of permanent sergeant, he told him explicitly, that that severe sentence was not passed upon him for having permitted Maume to write the letter, but because he had appeared too sanguine in favor of the prisoner. Hare justified his obligation of obeying the summons: observing, that *had he not appeared, t*e* man wou*l*d have been hanged. To be sure he wou*l*d* was the sheriff's reply, and *ad you remained at home, the court would have overlooked it.* An

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means of coercion was a fatal delusion of the drivers of the system.

application was made by Hare's son, through Lord Matthew, for the liberation of his father ; which was acceded to. But Colonel Cockell admonished the young man, that his father's was a serious breach of trust and grievous offence ; for the letter he had permitted to be written by Maume had saved Mr. Arthur's life. On the 20th of June Lord Cornwallis arrived in Dublin ; and it accidentally happened, that a young gentleman of the name of Gorman, a nephew of Mr. Arthur, lately arrived from London, being unknown to any of those, who had undertaken to keep the court clear of Mr. Arthur's friends, was present at the trial on Saturday. Anticipating the result of the proceedings, he set off for Dublin, where on the next morning he presented a petition to Lord Cornwallis, stating the circumstances, and praying, that if sentence should be given against the prisoner, the execution of it might be respited, till his excellency should have revised the minutes of the court-martial. This prayer was granted. It also occasioned a general order from Lord Cornwallis, that in future no sentence of a court-martial should be summarily executed, as was then usual, without the confirmation of the lord-lieutenant. On Tuesday morning, Mr. Gorman being informed, that General Morrison was determined to exact the fine of 5000*l.* from his uncle, waited on him to remonstrate against the manifest infraction of his excellency's commands, to which General Morrison laconically replied, " I have received Lord Castlereagh's letter respecting Mr. Arthur, and shall use my discretion for the contents. I order the money to be paid." Accordingly the collector of his Majesty's revenue took a bag from Mr. Arthur's desk, containing 1000 guineas in specie, and compelled his father instantly to make up the remainder. Notwithstanding the remonstrances of General Morrison to Lord Castlereagh's communication of his excellency's remission of the sentence, Lord Cornwallis sent a peremptory order, that Mr. Arthur's fine should be repaid to him, and he be allowed to go to Great Britain, or any other part of his Majesty's dominions.

Though the order for Mr. Arthur's acquittal and delivery bore date

The insurrection in the counties of Wicklow and Wexford assumed an appearance unusually ferocious. 1798.

Insurrec-
tion of
Wicklow
and Wex-
ford.

the 30th of June, 1798, yet was he kept in close confinement till the 6th of July, when, for the first time, Mr. Arthur was made acquainted with his excellency's order for the repayment of his fine and his liberation, through Colonel Cockell, by order of General Morrison. Colonel Cockell said to Mr. Arthur, *You must go to your house in a hand-chair, the curtain drawn about you. You are not to stir out of your house, and in 24 hours you are to quit Limerick.* Mr. Arthur was called upon to give security for his quitting Limerick within that time. But no such condition having been imposed upon him by his excellency, no one was found competent to take his recognizance. The limitation of time, though not required by his excellency, was again enforced, and Colonel Cockell observed, *half an hour more or less will not be taken notice of.* Mr. Arthur set off for Dublin, on the 7th of July, where he remained till October; constantly urging the lord-lieutenant to reverse the sentence of the court-martial, and allow him to prosecute Maume for perjury, that he might be in possession of formal and authentic documents, to clear and justify his own character. Mr. Cooke and Mr. Taylor, the under secretaries, as well as Lord Castlereagh, threw every difficulty in his way. The evidence of Maume they alleged was notoriously known to be false. He was already sentenced to Botany Bay for life, and the necessary delay of prosecuting Maume in a civil court would break in upon Mr. Arthur's wishes to go to England. Government did not, however, scruple in the intermediate time to employ this perjured miscreant to give evidence at Cork against some persons there under military prosecutions. Mr. Arthur was still naturally anxious for every justificative document that he could procure. He pressed to have copies of his excellency's different orders for respiting the sentence of the court-martial, liberating him, and repaying the fine. He was assured, that all these orders had been verbal!!! and that his excellency could do nothing more for him. Mr. Cooke to put an end to Mr.

1798. In the county of Wexford there had long subsisted a rivalry bordering on rancour, between the protestants

Arthur's further importunity, wrote to him the following letter on the 10th of October, 1798.

SIR, Castle, 10th Oct. 1798.

I examined William Maume, whose evidence I am clear is false ; he will be sent off and transported, and there cannot be any objection to your going whither you think most eligible. As far as I can give testimony to your character, I shall ever do it by saying, that I think it by no means implicated from any thing asserted by Maume ; and I certainly never heard any aspersion upon you from any one else. I am, &c.

To Francis Arthur, Esq.

E. COOKE.

Maume in the mean while was daily seen walking the streets of Cork. In January, 1799, he advertised his intention of publishing the whole of Mr. Arthur's trial, and all the means used to induce him (Maume) to give false evidence against him. He was instantly arrested, and thenceforth confined to the barracks (though in an officer's apartments) where he was frequently visited by Mr. Judkin Fitzgerald. Thence he was sent on board the *Minerva* transport, bound for Botany Bay. Despairing now of his pardon, and repenting, or pretending to repent, of his having borne false testimony against Mr. Arthur, he swore to, and signed a full and minute avowal of all the falsities he had given in evidence against Mr. Arthur, in order to criminate him capitally. This was done in the presence of Joseph Salkeld, the master, and Henry Harrison, the mate of the ship *Minerva* ; Thomas Holmes, Esq. late captain of the 54th, Kilner Brazier, Esq. late sheriff of Cork, and Arthur Arthur, and Peter Arthur, Esqrs. merchants of Cork. Mr. Arthur's last resort to do himself justice was to obtain the consent of the castle, to publish in the newspapers the letters of Messrs. Cooke and Taylor. This was refused on the pretext of the temper of the times. The most inventive novelist could

and catholics. The county of Wicklow was one of the most thriving districts in the kingdom. There persons of different religions, in the middle and inferior ranks, lived together in habits of cordiality. The gentlemen of landed interest in the county of Wexford had always been noted for their antipathy against catholics, and their representatives in parliament had uniformly opposed every mitigation of the popery laws. In these circumstances may be traced something of a predisposing cause to insurrection; but none such existed with respect to the county of Wicklow. The circumstance which brought forward the insurrection in the county of Wexford was the introduction of the Orange system by the North Cork militia. There Colonel Lord Kingsborough encouraged his men, who were mostly Orangemen, to wear medals and orange ribbons triumphantly pendent from their bosoms. Before their arrival in April there were but few actual Orangemen in that county; but soon after most of the protestants became open and sworn Orangemen. Reports were artfully circulated, that the armed protestants intended to massacre and expel the catholics, as they had from Armagh. This alarm was so prevalent, that on many occasions all the inhabitants for an extent of thirty miles deserted their houses, and slept in the open fields*. Many joined the association be-

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hardly have combined a chain of circumstances so peculiarly illustrative of the coercive system, under which Ireland now laboured.

* This fact was proved at the summer assizes of Wexford, 1798, before Lord Yelverton.

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cause they had no alternative; the armed corps generally considered every catholic a rebel; who received no credit much less merit for any act of loyalty. After the corps had been put on permanent duty, and the officers and magistrates had begun to torture and burn houses, multitudes of these people became fugitives from fear or actual want of dwellings: many from being exasperated at the sufferings of their acquaintance, friends, and kindred. Common sufferings brought these persons together and formed the rebellion of Wicklow and Wexford. Most of the atrocities committed in that rebellion were acts of retaliation. The rebellion in these two counties was more a sudden gust of revenge, than a preconcerted design.

Formal
commence-
ment of the
insurrec-
tion of
Wexford.

The general insurrection in the county of Wexford was occasioned on the 27th of May, by the unprovoked aggression of some yeomen, who entered and burnt the catholic chapel of Boolavogue, in the parish of Kilcormick. Immediately Father John Murphy, the parish priest, at the head of some of his parishioners, fell upon them; and several of the yeomen, with their two commanding officers, were killed. Father Murphy and some other priests*, who were driven or seduced into the rebellion, when once embarked in the cause, regularly exercised their spiritual functions in the camps. Numbers of people were shot in the roads, at work in the fields, and even in their houses,

* Out of 2000 priests, of which the catholic clergy in Ireland consists, only nine were known to have joined the rebellion: their names and characters are given in Hist. Rev. vol. III. p. 717.

unarmed and unoffending, by straggling parties of yeomen; which naturally drove others to seek refuge with their friends in arms. Hence, in the space of twenty-four hours, two large bodies were collected, one on the hill of Oulart, the other on Kiltomas Hill. They were confused multitudes of both sexes and all ages. 200 yeomen from Carnew marched against the body on Kiltomas Hill, which instantly fled in the utmost confusion, and above a hundred and fifty of the fugitives were killed in the pursuit: the yeomen in a march of seven miles burned two Catholic chapels, and about a hundred cabins and farm-houses of catholics.

The event of the attack on the same day on the hill of Oulart, where Father Murphy commanded, was different. A detachment of a hundred and ten men of the North Cork militia, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Foote, marched from Wexford, and attacked the rebels on the southern side of the hill. The rebels fled at the first onset and were pursued by the militia, without rank or order. Father Murphy rallied 300 of his men with so much vigor, that with their pikes they killed, almost in an instant, the whole detachment, except the lieutenant-colonel, a sergeant, and three privates. Of the 300 who rallied, only six were armed with firelocks, the rest had pikes. Three of the insurgents were killed, and six wounded by the disordered soldiery: Whilst the country exhibited a scene of distress and consternation, houses in flames, families flying in every direction for asylum, the body of rebels under Father Murphy, marched from Oulart,

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Rebels gain
an advantage
under
Father
Murphy.

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flushed with victory, and encreasing their numbers as they advanced. They first took possession of Camolin, a small town in which 800 armed themselves with guns, which within some few hours had been there deposited by Lord Mountnorris. On the 28th of May, Enniscorthy was attacked by this multitude, and after four hours' resistance, was left in the possession of the insurgents. The garrison fell back on Wexford: they lost about fourscore of their men, and set the town on fire in several places: the yeomen intended, and would have murdered all the prisoners, had not the jailer accidentally gone to Wexford with the key*. The sufferings and reports of the fugitives from Enniscorthy, who had retired with the troops to Wexford, and the discovery of the smoke and flames in a continued line from Wexford to Enniscorthy, excited the greatest alarm and consternation.

Deputation
sent to the
rebels.

Captain Boyd of the Wexford cavalry, in consequence of a requisition to that purpose of the sheriff and other gentlemen, on the 27th of June had arrested Beauchamp Bagenal Harvey, John Henry Colclough, and Edward Fitzgerald, all respectable gentlemen of the county of Wexford. Visiting them in prison on the 29th, Captain Boyd prevailed upon Messrs. Colclough and Fitzgerald to go to the rebels at Ennis-

* This butchery of prisoners without trial had been before frequently practised. "At Carnew 28 prisoners were brought out of the place of confinement and deliberately shot, in a bull alley, by the yeomen."—*Insur. Wexf.* p. 76. "At Dunlavin 34 were shot without trial, and among them the informer, on whose evidence they were arrested."—*Ibid.* 87.

corthy, and endeavour to persuade them to disperse and return to their homes; but would not give authority to promise any terms to the insurgents in case of submission. On the arrival of these two gentlemen at Enniscorthy, about four in the afternoon of the same day, they found the rebels in a state of confusion, distracted in their councils, and undetermined upon any plan of operation; some proposing to attack Newtownbarry, others Ross, others Wexford, others to remain in their present posts: the greater number to march home for the defence of their houses against Orangemen*. They thought more of defence, than aggression. † It was but the resolution of a moment to march in a body to attack Wexford. Mr. Fitzgerald they detained in the camp, and Mr. Colclough they sent back to announce their hostile intentions. Mr. Colclough, on his return to Wexford in the evening, announced the insurgents' determination of marching from Vinegar Hill to the attack of Wexford.

Early in the morning of the 29th, Colonel Maxwell, of the Donegal militia, with two hundred men of his regiment and a six pounder, arrived in Wexford from Duncannon fort, dispatched by General Fawcett, who had been apprized of the insurrection on the 27th. An express sent from the mayor of Wex-

1798.

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Detachment from  
Gen. Fawcett surprised.

\* The dread of *Orangemen* not of *Protestants* appears to have affected those rebels throughout. Even Sir Richard Musgrave has spoken truly on this point, (p. 335) "On Whitsunday they rose in mass, armed with pikes and guns, and vowed vengeance against the *Protestants as Orangemen*."

† Hays, p. 103.

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ford to that general, requesting an additional force, had returned with an answer, that the general himself would commence his march for Wexford on the same evening, with the 13th regiment, four companies of the Meath militia, and a party of artillery with two howitzers. General Fawcett halted on the evening of the 29th at Taghmon, seven miles from Wexford; but sent forward a detachment of 88 men, including 18 of the artillery, with the howitzers, under the command of Captain Adams, of the Meath militia. This detachment was intercepted early in the morning of the 30th: the howitzers were taken, and almost the whole party slain. General Fawcett retreated to Dunganon fort, and Colonel Maxwell, who had marched out to join him, was nearly surrounded, but with great address made good his retreat to Wexford, with the loss of Lieutenant-colonel Watson killed, and some privates wounded.

Internal  
confusion at  
Wexford.

At Wexford all were in desperate consternation. Some yeomen and supplementaries posted nearly opposite the gaol were heard continually threatening to put all the prisoners to death, which so roused the attention of the jailer to protect his charge, that he barricaded the door, and delivered up the key to Mr. Harvey. This gentleman was so apprehensive of violence, that he had concealed himself in the chimney, and it was not without great difficulty that some magistrates were admitted to see him in the jail. They forced him to write a letter to the insurgents, intimating, that he had been treated in prison with all possible humanity, and was then at liberty. That he



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had procured the liberty of all the prisoners; and entreating them in Christian charity, not to commit massacre, or burn the property of the inhabitants, but to spare their prisoners' lives. This note was sent to the insurgents, with an offer to surrender the town. Scarcely had this resolution been taken, when all the military corps, (a part of the Wexford infantry under Captain Hughes excepted) made the best of their way out of the town in whatever direction they imagined they could find safety, without acquainting their neighbours on duty with their intentions. The principal inhabitants, whose services had latterly been accepted of for the defence of the town, were mostly catholics, and according to the prevailing system, had been continually subjected to obloquy and insult. They were always placed in front of the posts, and cautioned to behave well, or that death should be the consequence. Persons were even placed behind them to keep them to their duty, who were so rigorously watchful, that they would not permit them to turn about their heads. Thus were the armed inhabitants left at their post, abandoned by their officers, and actually ignorant of the flight of the soldiery, until all possible means of retreating were cut off. The North Cork regiment on quitting the barracks set them on fire; but it was soon after extinguished. As the place was abandoned by the military, the multitude poured in with extravagant exultation. They first proceeded to the jail, released the prisoners, and insisted, that Mr. Harvey should become their commander. All the houses not abandoned by the inhabitants, were decor-

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ated with green boughs, and other emblematic symbols of insurrection. The doors were thrown open, and the multitude regaled with spirits and drink, of which however they uniformly refused to partake, until the persons offering them had first drunk themselves, as a proof, that the liquor was not poisoned ; a report having prevailed to that effect. Those, who did not throw open their doors suffered by plunder. The house of Captain Boyd, though not deserted, was pillaged and demolished.

Outrages of  
the run-  
away troops.

The troops who had fled from Wexford, signalized themselves in their retreat by plunder, devastation, and murder ; burning the cabins, and shooting the peasants in their progress ; and thus augmented the number and rage of the insurgents. These excesses were seen from the insurgents' station at the Three Rocks, and it was with extreme difficulty, that the enraged multitude were hindered by their chiefs from rushing down upon Wexford, and taking summary vengeance of the town and its inhabitants. The insurgents were extremely irritated at the breach of the condition, which they had insisted upon, of all the arms and ammunition being delivered up.

Gorey evacuated,  
and retreat to  
Arklow.

The turn of this rebellion now rendered both sides ferocious, even to their associates. When Gorey could be no longer defended by its slender garrison, it was evacuated on the next morning at five o'clock, and the inhabitants were ordered to retire to Arklow. Fainting with hunger, thirst, fatigue, and the want of sleep, the fugitives were denied admittance into the town, and forced to seek refuge in the fields, where they

remained, till the rebels, by bending their course to the south, left Gorey: and then they returned to it unmolested.

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At Vinegar Hill, which commands the town of Enniscorthy, the rebels formed, what they called a camp, from which they daily garrisoned the town, by an officer's guard. They wantonly destroyed the interior of the church\*.

Camp at Vinegar Hill.

The King's troops gained some advantages at the village of Ballycannoo, where they fired most of the houses; and also at Newtownbarry, which gave a momentary check to the rebels. Disheartened at their recent defeats, they took post on Corrigrua Hill in great force, where they rested on their arms till the 4th of June. In the mean time, a corps of 1500 men, with 5 pieces of artillery, under General Loftus, arrived at Gorey. Thence they marched in two divisions, by different roads to Corrigrua. The rebels surprised the division under Colonel Walpole†, at a place called Tubberneering. He fell on the first

Alternate successes of the King's troops and rebels.

\* This was the first outrage committed by the rebels on a protestant church. There were afterwards some, though not many more such instances. In order to avoid the odious detail of the wanton destruction of places of divine worship, a list may be seen of the catholic chapels destroyed in time of and after the rebellion, in the Appendix to my Hist. Rev. No. CXII.

† This gentleman was a relative and favourite of Lord Camden. He was no soldier; but, through importunity at the castle, had procured the command of five hundred men. He refused to employ scouts or flanking parties, and was not aware of the enemy, till they were within gun shot. He was conspicuously mounted on a white charger, in full uniform and plumage



1793. fire, and his troops fled in the utmost disorder, leaving two six pounders, and a smaller piece, in the hands of the enemy. They were pursued as far as Gorey; in their flight through which, they were galled by the fire of some of the rebels, who had taken station in the houses. The unfortunate loyalists of Gorey once more fled to Arklow with the routed army, leaving all their effects behind. While Walpole's division was attacked, General Loftus, being within hearing of the musquetry, detached 70 men, the grenadier company of the Antrim militia, across the fields to its assistance; but they were intercepted by the rebels, and almost all killed or taken. The general, still ignorant of the fate of Colonel Walpole's division, and unable to bring his artillery across the fields, continued his march along the highway, by a circuit, to the field of battle, where he first learnt the fate of Colonel Walpole and his division. He retreated to Carnew: and at the head of twelve hundred effective men, abandoned that part of the country, by retiring to Tullow.

Siege of  
New Ross.

Whilst one formidable body of the Wexford insurgents, under the command of Edward Roche, was advancing towards the north, another still more formidable, under the command of Mr. Harvey, penetrated to the south-west. The conquest of New Ross would have opened the communication with the disaffected in the counties of Waterford and Kilkenny, in which many thousands were supposed ready to rise in arms at the appearance of their successful confederates. This latter body took post on

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Carrickburne mountain, within six miles of Ross, where it was reviewed and organized till the 4th of June, when it marched to Corbet Hill, within a mile of that town, which it was intended to attack the next morning. Mr. Harvey possessed much resolution, and a good understanding, but no military experience. He had, however, formed the plan of an attack on three different parts of the town at once, which would probably have succeeded had it been put in execution. Having sent a flag of truce, with a summons to General Johnson, who commanded the King's troops, to surrender the town, the bearer of it, Mr. Furlong, was shot by the sentinel of an out-post. \* This so

\* To shoot all persons carrying flags of truce from the rebels appears to have been a maxim with his majesty's forces. The measure if wise, was certainly less productive of good, than evil consequences. In Mr. Furlong's pocket was found the following letter to General Johnson.

"SIR,

"As a friend to humanity, I request you will surrender the town of Ross to the Wexford forces now assembled against that town. Your resistance will but provoke rapine and plunder, to the ruin of the most innocent. Flushed with victory, the Wexford forces, now innumerable and irresistible, will not be controlled, if they meet with resistance. To prevent, therefore, the total ruin of all property in the town, I urge you to a speedy surrender, which you will be forced to in a few hours, with loss and bloodshed, as you are surrounded on all sides. Your answer is required in four hours. Mr. Furlong carries this letter, and will bring the answer.

"I am, Sir,

"B. B. HARVEY,

"General commanding, &c. &c. &c."

"Camp at Corbett Hill, half past three o'clock  
in the morning, June 5, 1798."

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exasperated the insurgents, that under the command of Mr. Kelly, they rushed impetuously into the town, drove back the cavalry with slaughter on the infantry, seized the cannon, and became masters of a great part of the town; upon which a panic seized the King's troops, who retired to the Kilkenny side of the bridge, and several of the officers fled to Waterford, with the alarming intelligence. Major General Johnson, perceiving that the insurgents instead of following their advantage, gave up themselves to drinking, with great prudence brought back to the charge his fugitive troops, who presently recovered their post, and drove the rebels from the town. The rebels, in their turn, rallied by their chiefs, returned with redoubled fury to the assault, regained their lost ground, and relapsed into riot and intoxication. Again dislodged by the same exertions as before, and a third time rallied, but still more disabled by their intemperance, they were at last finally repulsed, after a contest of above ten hours. Lord Mountjoy, who commanded the Dublin militia, fell early in the day. Three hundred of the King's troops were killed, and above four times that number of the insurgents; the greater part of them after the action was over. When the rebel army marched to Corbet Hill, several prisoners had been left under a guard, in a barn belonging to Scullabogue house, at the foot of Carrickburne mountain.

Massacre  
of Scullabogue.

In the course of the forenoon, some of the rebels ran away from the assault, and declared, that the Royal army in Ross were shooting all the prisoners, and



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butchering the catholics, who had fallen into their hands; they even forged an order from Harvey for the execution of those at Scullabogue. It was resisted by the officer. But the runaways were brutal as they were dastardly. They rushed into the prison, shot and piked 37 at the hall door; and the rest, since computed at above 100, were burnt alive in the barn. This inhuman barbarity was not the consequence of any regular system, but perpetrated by the runaway rebels, to palliate their own flight, by inventions and exaggerations of the cruelty of the King's troops. On the day after the rebels' defeat at Ross, they resumed their position on Carrickburn hill. Discontent pervaded the whole army. Loud murmurs were heard against their commander in chief, who in consequence resigned his command, and retired to Wexford. He was disheartened at the failure of the preceding day, and disgusted at the general insubordination of the forces. His last act of power was a general order, denouncing death against such persons, as should murder any prisoner, burn any house, or commit any plunder, without special written orders from the commander in chief\*.

The rebels remained two days at Carrickburn; they then took post on Sleeva Keelta, a neighbouring hill, commanding the river of Ross, where by a tumultuous election, they chose for general, in the room of

Father  
Roche suc-  
ceeds Har-  
vey in the  
command.

\* That order, and several particulars relating to the massacre of Scullabogue, are to be seen in Hist. Rev. vol. III. p. 731, &c.

1798.

Harvey, Father Philip Roche, a man of athletic powers and boisterous manners, and not ill adapted to controul the disorderly bands he had to deal with. This choice gave to the contest a new tinge of crusade. The term *United Irishmen* was sunk into that of *Popish Rebels*, and the denomination of *Orangemen* into that of *Protestants and Heretics*. This circumstance proved how little the Wexford insurrection had been preconcerted. Quitting the post of Sleeva Keelta three days after their arrival, the troops under Father Roche occupied the hill of Lacken, within two miles of Ross, where for some days they lay inactive, regaling themselves on the slaughtered cattle and liquors they had plundered.

Wicklow  
Insurrec-  
tion. Battle  
of Arklow.

The insurgents of the county of Wicklow had with extreme difficulty been kept in check by Major Hardy, who had notwithstanding been repulsed in five different rencounters; which though singly of slight importance, encreased the rebels' assurance and eagerness to co-operate with the Wexford insurgents. On the 9th of June, the rebels, after having wasted some time in burning the town of Carnew, trying prisoners for Orangism, and plundering houses, collected their forces at Gorey, and advanced to attack Arklow, with a force exceeding twenty thousand men, of whom near five thousand were armed with guns, the rest with pikes, and furnished with three serviceable pieces of artillery. The garrison consisted of sixteen hundred men, including yeomen and artillery. The rebels' attack was so impetuous,

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that the piquet guard of yeoman cavalry, on which it first fell, instantly fled in the utmost confusion. The farther progress of the assailants, though equally fierce, was prevented by the firmness of the infantry, particularly the Durham fencibles, commanded by the brave Colonel Skerret, who when General Needham talked of a retreat, spiritedly replied that he knew the spirit of his corps, and could never bear the idea of its giving ground. This magnanimous answer diverted the general for some time from his plan of retreat. In the mean time the rebels retired in despair, frustrated in their furious assault and dispirited by the death of Father Michael Murphy, who was killed by a cannon shot, within thirty yards of the Durham line, while he was leading his people to the attack. The battle of Arklow, though not the most bloody, was perhaps the most important of this civil war, as by the unfavourable turn it gave to the rebel arms, it probably decided the fate of Ireland.

The town of Wexford was the prime seat of rebellion in the south. It remained in the possession of the rebel force, from the 30th of May to the 21st of June, during which time it was the scene of many horrors. The sanguinary and vindictive turn the insurrection had very early taken, rendered submission alike dreadful to both parties. On the evacuation of the town by the military, the vessels in the harbour were instantly crowded with fugitives, and the quays with men, women, and

Horrors in  
the town of  
Wexford.



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children, who to avoid falling into the hands of the rebels, begged in the most pitiable manner to be admitted on board the vessels. On seeing the flames of the toll-house and bridge, all the vessels weighed and stood towards the mouth of the harbour, where they cast anchor. About one o'clock, a white flag was seen flying in Wexford (a signal that the rebels were in possession of the town); all the captains answered the signal, except two, who sailed for Wales. They then again weighed anchor, and stood for the town, where they soon landed all their passengers to share the fate of their neighbours. The rebels, who entered the town, were headed by Edward Roche, who had been permanent sergeant in Colonel Le Hunte's corps of yeomen cavalry, from which he had deserted, and become a rebel general. By acclamation they appointed General Keugh governor and commandant of the town; and bore him on their shoulders to the court-house. This man had, from a private, risen to the rank of captain-lieutenant in the 6th regiment, in which he served in America. He was of engaging address, had long been in the habit of freely censuring the corruptions of government, and was so violent an advocate for reform, that the chancellor had stricken him out of the commission of the peace, in the year 1796. In order to introduce some order into the town, certain persons were chosen to distribute provisions, in rateable portions, amongst the inhabitants. The habitations of many of such protestants as had escaped were plun-

1798.

dered, some were demolished, and few houses even of those Protestants that remained were spared. The most obnoxious \* protestants were committed to prison: yet many were still at large, who were really attached to the popular cause, or who from fear now affected to be so. During the tumultuary rule of this enraged multitude, many murders were perpetrated with a savage affectation of solemnity, in order to excite the enthusiasm of the mob.

Most, if not all of the massacres at Wexford, lay at the door of an infuriate monster of the name of Atrocities  
of Dixon,

\* The following rebel proclamation seems to justify the idea, that they had no intent or wish to spill the blood of any, who had not been guilty of acts of cruelty, violence, and oppression against the people. All Orangemen they considered guilty.

*Proclamation of the People of the County of Wexford.*

“Whereas it stands manifestly notorious, that James Boyd, Hawtry White, Hunter Gowran, and Archibald Hamilton Jacob, late magistrates of this county, have committed the most horrid acts of cruelty, violence, and oppression, against our peaceable and well affected countrymen. Now we, the people, associated and united for the purpose of procuring our just rights, and being determined to protect the persons and properties of those of all religious persuasions, who have not oppressed us, and are willing with heart and hand to join our glorious cause, as well as to shew our marked disapprobation and horror of the crimes of the above delinquents, do call on our countrymen at large to use every exertion in their power to apprehend the bodies of the aforesaid James Boyd, &c. &c. &c. and to secure and convey them to the gaol of Wexford, to be brought before the tribunal of the people.

“Done at Wexford, this 9th day of June, 1798.

“God save the People.”

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Dixon, a captain of a trading vessel, then lying in the harbour: he was the first to re-land the fugitives he had on board, towards whom (particularly the ladies) he behaved with brutal ferocity. On his return to shore he was made a captain in the rebel army; which increased his influence, and extended his means of exciting the rabble to those atrocities, in which he delighted. The wife of this man, as inhuman as himself, had purloined from the drawing-room of Mr. Le Hunte, four miles from Wexford, two fire-screens with emblematical figures. Dixon informed the mob, that this room had been the meeting-place of Orangemen, and that the figures denoted the manner, in which the Roman Catholics were to be put to death by these conspirators; that they were to be first deprived of their sight, and then burned alive, without the exception even of children; and particularly that the seamen of that communion were to be roasted to death on red-hot anchors. Mr. Le Hunte, who had hitherto been permitted to remain quietly in a private house in the town, was instantly dragged into the street by the rabble, who would soon have torn him to pieces, had he not been saved by the exertions of Mr. Edward Hay, and Mr. Robert Carty, two catholic gentlemen, who prudently hurried him into the gaol, under pretence of bringing him to trial, and parried in the crowd the thrusts of the pikes, two of which, in spite of their endeavours, wounded him slightly in the back\*. The number of protestants in the town

\* Gordon, second edition, p. 178. Mr. E. Hay, in 1802, wrote a very interesting letter to Mr. Gordon on some mistake-



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of Wexford, when it fell into the hands of the rebels, did not merely consist of the inhabitants of that town and its environs, but had been greatly encreased by the assemblage of refugees and prisoners from more distant parts of the country. Of these, about 260 were secured in the jail and other places of confinement : some were kept in their own houses : the dread of massacre fell indiscriminately upon them all. On the 6th of June, under an order from Enniscorthy, ten prisoners at Wexford were selected for execution, and suffered accordingly. The limitation of the victims to half a score, under this order, was made upon the principle of retaliation : those, who gave it, having received information, that a similar number of their people had suffered in like manner on the preceding day. A \* general slaughter of the prisoners was twice attempted by the sanguinary Dixon, at the head of bands of peasants. He was magnanimously opposed, first by one Hore, a butcher, and next by one Scallion, a nautical trader ; the former with a sword, the latter with a pistol, defying him to single combat, and insisting, that he must shew himself a man, before he should dare to put defenceless men to death. Notwithstanding the brutality and influence of

ments in the first edition of his history, which the reverend author has had the candor to publish at full length in the Appendix to his second edition, to be seen in Appendix to Historical Review, No. CXIII. The Rev. Historian there says he is convinced, that Mr. Hay had no command among the rebels, and exerted himself only to save lives and property. Mr. Edward Hay has, since the publication of Mr. Gordon's second edition, published a very authentic and interesting history of the insurrection of Wexford.

\* Gordon, second edition, p. 180.

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Dixon, and some few individuals of his cast, over the most infuriated fanatics of the multitude, the leaders of the rebels solemnly disclaimed every idea of cruelty, and strongly recommended brotherly love and affection towards their countrymen of every religious persuasion\*. An influx of fugitive rebels from the northern parts of the county, by retailing some and exaggerating or inventing other facts of barbarity committed upon them by the soldiery, had worked up to an unaccountable degree the vindictive ferocity of the lowest rebels, which the barbarous Dixon enflamed by whiskey, and the most inhuman exhortations. This monster had art in his barbarity. The Rev. Mr. Dixon, his relative, a catholic clergyman, having been sentenced to transportation, had been sent off to Duncannon Fort the day preceding the insurrection: he was found guilty on the testimony of one Francis Murphy, whose evidence had been positively contradicted by three other witnesses. Under these circumstances, Dixon took a summary mode of avenging the fate of his kinsman, who was generally beloved. He brought this Murphy out of gaol, upon his own sole authority, and conducted him down to the bull-ring, where he obliged three revenue officers, who were then prisoners, and whom he brought out along with him, to shoot him, and afterwards bear his body to the quay and throw it into the water. This execution took place, with all its circumstances, while most of

\* See the proclamations, signed B. B. Harvey, on the 6th of June, and by Edward Roche, on the 7th, in the Appendix to Historical Review, No. CXIV.

the town's people were at prayers, and was utterly unknown to the principal inhabitants. 1798,

Dr. Caulfield\*, the catholic bishop of Ferns, and others of his clergy in that diocese, exerted themselves with the utmost zeal at the hazard of their lives to prevent bloodshed, and preserve the lives and property of

Exertions of the catholic clergy to prevent bloodshed, and save the lives of the protestants.

\* It suffices to state two letters written to Dr. Troy by Colonel Littlehales, secretary to Lord Cornwallis, after the heat of the ferment had subsided, and after the publication of Sir Richard Musgrave's rancorous untruths, as testimonies of his loyalty and meritorious conduct on this trying occasion. Some very curious and interesting details of the exertions and dangers of that respectable prelate, who is since deceased, and his clergy, are to be seen in *Historical Review*, vol. III. p. 750, &c.

*Dublin Castle, May 11th, 1800:*

" SIR,

" IN answer to the honor of your letter of the 9th instant, which I have laid before my lord-lieutenant, I am to assure you, that government will give to Dr. Caulfield that protection, which, from his conduct and character as a loyal subject, he appears justly to merit.

" I have the honor to be,

" Sir,

" Your most obedient and faithful servant,

E. B. LITTLEHALES.

" *The most Rev. Dr. Troy, &c. &c. &c.*  
*North King Street."*

*Dublin Castle, June 30th, 1800.*

" SIR,

" YOUR letter of the 28th current having reached me, with its enclosure from Dr. Caulfield, I have stated their contents to my lord-lieutenant, who desires me to say, that his ex-



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the protestants. Sir Richard Musgrave, the indefatigable traducer of ancient and modern Ireland, has laboured all he could by disseminating false calumnies, to criminate that respectable prelate and his clergy.

Lord Kings-  
borough  
taken by  
the rebels.

So radically had the fatal enthusiasm extinguished all sense of duty in the misguided wretches in this temporary phrenzy, that it became a service of as much danger to dehort them from their wicked purposes, as to hoist an orange cockade, or to threaten to flog, strangle, or picquet them. Lord Kingsborough (now Earl of Kingston), the colonel of the North Cork regiment of militia, was in Dublin when the town was taken possession of by the rebels. Disbelieving the report of this disaster, he set out under obstinate incredulity to join his regiment: he travelled by land to Arklow, and thence proceeding by sea to Wexford, was taken prisoner with two officers of his regiment off the harbour of that town. The capture of Lord Kingsborough was considered by the rebels as an incident of peculiar importance to them, not only on account of his situation in life, but more especially as his lordship had ever been prominently

"cellency has no cause whatsoever to alter the opinion he has  
"imbibed of the loyalty and proper deportment of Dr. Caulfield,  
"whose letter I return.

"I have the honor to be,

"Sir,

"Your most obedient and faithful servant,

E. B. LITTLEHALES.

"The most Rev. Dr. Troy, &c. &c. &c.  
North King Street."

zealous in promoting the system of coercion so obnoxious to the United Irishmen. The more reflecting of them had further views in his importance as an hostage, in case of their being driven to terms of capitulation. To the unremitting and hazardous exertions of Dr. Caulfield does this nobleman owe his life.

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On the 19th of June, General Edward Roche, and such of the insurgents of his neighbourhood, as were at Vinegar Hill, were sent home to collect the whole mass of the people for general defence. By the march of the royal army in all directions, towards Vinegar Hill and Wexford, a general flight of such of the inhabitants as could get off took place. The alarm was general throughout the country; all men were called to attend the camps; and Wexford became the universal rendezvous of the fugitives, who reported the approach of the army, marking it's movements with horror and devastation. Ships of war were also seen off the coast: gun-boats blocked up the entrance of the harbour: and from the commanding situation of the camp at the Three Rocks, on the mountain of Forth, the general conflagration, which was as progressive as the march of the troops, was clearly perceivable. General Moore\*, who advanced

Consternation at Wexford on the approach of the army,

\* This great and ever to be lamented hero, who lately fell a victim to the councils of some of those very men, who were now driving the system in Ireland, was an eleve and favourite of Sir R. Abercrombie, who had resigned the command of the troops acting under a system, which he could neither support as a Briton nor as a soldier.

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with a part of the army, did all in his power to prevent these atrocities, and had some of the outragers immediately put to death. This humane and benevolent conduct ill suited the intentions and views of the terrorists. He was instantly ordered to Wicklow, where his conciliatory conduct and humanity were conspicuous, and will ever be remembered with gratitude by the people of that neighbourhood, who eagerly flocked to his standard for protection. The principal inhabitants of Wexford having met in consultation upon the best mode of defence, issued an order for all the armed men to appear in camp by break of day. Captain Dixon, although completely accoutred for battle, refused to obey the order, which was communicated to him, whilst in the act of sending whiskey to a picked band of 70 ferocious peasants, whom he had posted in the barrack, and there detained for his abominable purpose of a general massacre. He had formed a reserve guard of some thousands of the most dastardly and unruly, consequently the most savage and cruel of the mob, who had refused to march to the camp. These he also plied with liquor, to render them the fitter for the work of blood. The victims were conducted from the prison in separate detachments of about ten or fifteen, with horrible solemnity, each surrounded by a guard of butchers, and preceded by a black flag marked with a white cross, to the place of execution, where they were, after their names had been separately called over, put to death, one after another. One was slaughtered at the door



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of the jail, the rest on the bridge. A multitude of wretches (the greater part women) assembled to behold the scene of blood, and rent the air with savage shouts of exultation on the arrival of each detachment at the fatal spot. When 35 had been thus butchered, the slaughter, which had commenced at two o'clock in the afternoon, was stopped at seven by the interference of Father Corrin, a catholic clergyman, who had gone thither to endeavour to stop the shedding of blood. On his arrival on the bridge, he for some time vainly supplicated the assassins to desist. Then, in an authoritative tone, he commanded them to pray, before they should proceed farther in the work of death; having thus caused them to kneel, he dictated a prayer, that God might shew the same mercy to them, which they should shew to the surviving prisoners. The respite thus procured was rendered happily efficient by a report, that Vinegar Hill was beset by the king's troops. This intelligence instantly caused the multitude to disperse. The surviving captives at the bridge were after a short pause re-conducted to prison by their guard, with denunciations of a general massacre of all the protestants on the next day.

We must leave the tumultuary horrors of Wexford to follow the movements of the army, which led to the final liberation of that town from the ruthless tyranny of the rebels. After the battle of Arklow the royal army remained some days close within its quarters; but when the country about Gorey was evacuated by the rebels, Major-general Needham moved from Arklow thither on the 19th of June, and

Movements  
of the army.

1798.

thence towards Enniscorthy on the 20th, according to a concerted plan of General Lake, that the great station of the rebels at Vinegar Hill should be surrounded by his majesty's forces, and attacked in all points at once. This eminence, with the town of Enniscorthy at its foot, and the country for many miles round had been in the possession of the rebels from the 28th of May, during which time the face of affairs had been indescribably horrid. Of the prisoners, who had fallen into the hands of the rebels, between three and four hundred were put to death; several after a sham trial; many without any trial at all\*.

Battle of  
Vinegar  
Hill.

The army employed to surround the rebel post of Vinegar Hill, constituted a force of about thirteen thousand effective men, with a formidable train of artillery, with which the whole insurgent army at that post might have been completely surrounded. The attack began at seven o'clock on the morning of the 21st, with a firing of cannon and mortars. All the divisions were at their respective posts, except that of General Needham, who either from neglect or accident, arrived not at his appointed position till nine, when the business was over. The rebels, after sus-

\* In these unfortunate civil contests, retaliation took place, without any reciprocity of right or law. At the same time the rebel General Murphy experienced similar treatment from the army. Being a priest, he was tauntingly desired to work miracles, scoffed at, and particularly insulted by a young officer, who went the length of offering indecent insult to his person, which so irritated his feelings, that, though on the brink of eternity, with his fist he knocked down the officer at a blow. He was then flogged and instantly hanged.

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taining the fire of the artillery and small arms for an hour and an half, fled through the passage, which lay open from the non-arrival of General Needham. They directed their course towards Wexford. Some hundred stragglers after the battle were killed; most of the real rebels escaped. As the flight of the rebels was precipitate, they left behind them a quantity of rich plunder, with thirteen pieces of ordnance. The loss on the side of the king's forces was inconsiderable. \*Excesses, to be expected in such a crisis, were committed by the soldiery, particularly by the foreign corps, who made no distinction between loyalist and rebel. A house, used as an hospital by the rebels, was set on fire, in which many sick and wounded were burned to ashes†.

On the 21st of June, Capt. Macmanus, of the Antrim, and Lieut. Hay, of the North Cork Militia, who were prisoners with the rebels, were sent with proposals from the inhabitants of Wexford, to surrender the town, and return to their allegiance, provided their lives and properties should be guaranteed by the commanding officer. The acceptance of these terms

Wexford's  
offer to sur-  
render re-  
jected.

\* Great discontents prevailed in the army upon General Needham's conduct on this, as on a former occasion. It raised a personal contest between Sir Richard Musgrave and Mr. Gordon. The sarcastical allusions, which became general after the action of the late General Needham and General Needham's gap, shew on which side (perhaps unwarrantably) the weight of inculcation lay.

† The Rev. Mr. Gordon says, he was informed by a surgeon, that the burning was accidental, the bed clothes having been set on fire by the wadding of the soldier's guns, who were shooting the patients in their beds.



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Lord Kingsborough had undertaken personally to answer for. They were, however, disdainfully rejected by General Lake, who returned for answer, that no terms could be granted to rebels in arms; but that the deluded multitude might have peace and protection when their arms and leaders should have been delivered into his hands.

Wexford  
occupied  
by the  
king's  
troops.

The insurgents were with difficulty prevailed on by their chiefs to quit the town. They divided themselves into two bodies: one under the command of the Reverend Philip Roche, marched into the barony of Forth, and encamped that night at Sledagh; the other, under the conduct of Messieurs Fitzgerald, Perry, and Edward Roche, proceeded over the bridge to Peppard's Castle, where they took their station for that night. After the approach of the king's troops, upon the rebels evacuating the town, Captain Boyd, the representative of Wexford, returning under their convoy, made many cautious inquiries, from Captain Bourke, who had come recently from that town, and having himself, from the commanding elevation of the road, observed the retreat of the insurgents over the bridge, entered the town attended with eight yeomen, almost with as much precipitancy, as he had formerly abandoned it, loudly declaring the army at his heels. The face of the town was instantly changed; persons, who the moment before had appeared anxious to demonstrate their friendship for the insurgents, instantaneously exhibited stronger attachment to the king's troops. General Moore, thinking it most advisable not to let the troops into

the town, in order to prevent its being plundered and destroyed, took his station on the Windmill Hills, which commanded the town. However, shortly after, the rest of the army not under his command, entered the town, and immediately all the wounded men in the hospital were put to the sword, as were many straggling inhabitants and others, who thought themselves in security.

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Relying on the faith of Lord Kingsborough's promises of complete protection of persons and properties, several remained in the town of Wexford, unconscious of any reason to apprehend danger; but they were soon taken up and committed to jail. The Reverend Philip Roche had such confidence in them, and was so certain of obtaining similar terms for those under his command, that he left his force at Sledagh in full hopes of being permitted to return in peace to their homes, and was on his way to Wexford unarmed, coming, as he thought, to receive a confirmation of the conditions, and so little apprehensive of danger, that he advanced within the lines, before he was recognized. He was instantly dragged from his horse, and in the most ignominious manner taken up to the camp on the Windmill Hills, pulled by the hair, kicked, buffeted, and at length hauled down to the gaol in such a condition, as scarcely to be recognized. The people, whom he had left in expectation of being permitted to return quietly home, being informed of his fate, abandoned all idea

Capture of  
Father Philip  
Roche

1798. of peace, and set off under the command of the  
 ~~~~~ Reverend John Murphy to the county of Carlow.

Horrors of
 the County
 of Wexford.

Death and desolation now visited the county of Wexford so severely, that scarcely a man escaped; the old and harmless suffered, whilst they, who had the use of their limbs and were guilty, had previously made off with the main body of the people. The northern part of the county was deserted by most of its male inhabitants on the 19th, at the approach of the army under General Needham. Some of the yeomanry, who had formerly deserted Gorey, returned thither on the 21st, and finding no officer of the army as was expected to command there, licentiously scoured the country, killed great numbers in their houses, and all the stragglers they met, most of whom were making their way home unarmed from the insurgents, then generally believed to be totally discomfited. These transactions being made known to a body of the insurgents, encamped at Peppard's castle, they resolved to retaliate, and marched directly for Gorey, whither they had otherwise no intention of proceeding. The yeomen on their approach fled with precipitation towards Arklow, but were pursued as far as Coolgreney, with the loss of forty-seven men. The day was called bloody Friday. The insurgents had been exasperated to this vengeance by discovering through the country, as they came along, several dead men, with their skulls split asunder, their bowels ripped open, and their throats cut across, besides some dead women and children, whose carcasses

the pigs were devouring, or preying upon some still expiring. 1798.

In the midst of these scenes of blood and slaughter, the Marquis Cornwallis arrived in Dublin on the 20th of June, 1798, with a plenitude of power exceeding that of his predecessor, by the supremacy of the military command having been superadded to the civil government of the country. Yet as in the first days of his administration the old system was completely acted upon in the settlement of the Wexford rebellion, it will be fitting to lay these posthumous acts of the extorted system of coercion rather at the close of Lord Camden's, than the commencement of Lord Cornwallis's administration. After the total evacuation of the town of Wexford by the rebel forces, under a general confidence, that their proposal and Lord Kingsborough's undertaking would have been attended to and observed, General Lake entered the town on the 22d of June, in the morning, and remained there with his staff for several days. Almost all the principal inhabitants were immediately taken up, confined to gaol, and arraigned for treason. Two days Captain Keugh remained at Lord Kingsborough's lodgings, under two sentinels, before he was removed to gaol. Mr. Cornelius Grogan was taken at his seat at Johnstown where he had remained, unconscious of any danger, until conducted to prison. Mr. Bagenal Harvey had gone to his residence at Bargycastle, in such confidence, that the terms agreed upon with Lord Kingsborough would be ratified, that he sent some fat cattle in

Arrival of
Marquis
Cornwallis.

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Wexford for the use of the army ; but learning from the messenger, who drove them thither, that no conditions whatever would be obtained, he hastened with the fatal news to Mr. Colclough. This gentleman had previously taken his wife and child to one of the Saltee islands, where he thought to have weathered out the angry storm in a cave, which he had resorted to for concealment. Thither Mr. Harvey also repaired ; they were all soon discovered, and brought to Wexford, where they were confined in the condemned cells. Courts-martial sat upon the Rev. Philip Roche, Captain Keugh, Mr. Grogan, Mr. Harvey, Mr. Prendergast, and Mr. Kelly, who had behaved with such intrepidity at the attack on New Ross, where he was wounded : they were all found guilty, and successively executed. Their bodies were treated with indecent barbarity. It was afterwards discovered, that the court-martial had been so precipitate as not even to have sworn in the members.

*Insurrection
in Ulster.*

The province of Ulster, where insurrection had been most of all dreaded, and where from the spirit of the inhabitants it would, if extensive, have been the most formidable, had hitherto remained undisturbed. On the 7th of June, a meeting of magistrates having been appointed in the town of Antrim for the prevention of rebellion, some insurgents, with design of seizing their persons, attacked the town at two o'clock in the afternoon, and soon overpowering the troops within it, had possession of it for some time, but were dislodged by Colonel Durham, who battered the town with some artillery, and obliged the insur-

1798.


gents to abandon it. On this day Lord O'Neil was mortally wounded*. Some other feeble attempts were made at Ballymena and Ballycastle. The main body of these northern insurgents retired to Donegar hill, where, disgusted with their want of success and other circumstances, they surrendered their arms and dispersed. On the 8th of June a more considerable body of insurgents in the county of Down, near Saintfield, nearly surrounded a body of troops under Colonel Stapleton, consisting of York fencibles and yeomen cavalry, of whom they killed about sixty: the infantry, however, rallied and dispersed the rebels, and after a stay of two hours on the field of battle, retreated to Belfast. Little discouraged by this defeat, in which their loss was trifling, the rebels reassembled, and took post at Ballynahinch on the Windmill hill, at the house and in the demesne of Lord Moira. On the 12th General Nugent marching from Belfast, and Colonel Stewart from Downpatrick, formed a junction with fifteen hundred men near the Windmill hill, and with a policy wholly unaccountable, set fire to the town before the action. The action was maintained about three hours: the artillery did little execution; at length the Monaghan regiment of militia, posted with two field pieces at Lord Moira's great gate, was attacked with such determined fury by the

* He rode into the town to attend the meeting of the magistrates, not knowing that the rebels were in possession of it. He shot one, who seized the bridle of his horse, after which he was dragged from his saddle, and so wounded with pikes, that he died in a few days.

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pikemen of the insurgents, that it fell back in confusion on the Hillsborough cavalry, which fled in disorder. The want of discipline in the insurgents lost what their valour had gained. The disordered troops found means to rally, while the Argyleshire fencibles, entering the demesne, were making their attack on another side. The insurgents confused and distracted retreated up the hill, and making a stand at the top, at a kind of fortification, defended the post for some time with great courage, but at length gave way and dispersed in all directions. Their loss exceeded a hundred; that of the royal army threescore. The main body of these insurgents retired to the mountains of Slyeeve Croob, where they soon after surrendered and returned to their several homes. Thus terminated this short but active northern insurrection, in the course of which some slighter actions took place, particularly at Portaferry, where the insurgents were repulsed by the yeomanry. They set fire to a revenue cruizer, in which forty men perished.

insurgency
in the County of Cork.

In one other part of the kingdom only did the insurrection break out during Lord Camden's administration, namely, in the county of Cork. The principal action, and the only one, which government has thought proper to communicate to the public, took place near the village of Ballynascarty, where on the 19th of June, according to their account, two hundred and twenty men of the Westmeath regiment of militia, with two six pounders, under the command of their Lieutenant-colonel, Sir Hugh O'Reilly, were attacked on their march from Clognakelty to Bandon, by a

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}

body of between three and four hundred men, placed in ambush and armed almost all with pikes. The attack was made from an height on the left of the column, so unexpectedly and rapidly, that the troops had scarcely time to form; when at that critical moment, a hundred men of the Caithness legion arrived on the spot, and by a brisk fire helped to put the assailants to flight. Their loss amounted to about fifty men; that of the royal troops, by the commander's account, only to a sergeant and one private; which is highly probable, as the insurgents had no fire-arms.

CHAPTER VIII.

Administration of Marquis Cornwallis.

1798.

Marquis
Cornwallis
assumes the
Govern-
ment.

ON the 21st of June, 1798, Marquis Cornwallis assumed the civil government and supreme military command, which it was found necessary to unite in the same person. This appointment under Providence was the salvation of Ireland. His lordship had it in his special commission to put down the rebellion in Ireland by moderation, and to check the ferocity of the Orange system by firmness. A change in the whole system of governing that country had become imperiously necessary, and this nobleman was selected by Mr. Pitt for the purpose. What ulterior commission he had from the British cabinet with reference to the union of the two kingdoms, subsequent events may shew*.

* It is the fashionable cry of a certain party, which systematically opposes every proposal brought forward for the advantage of Ireland, to identify the principles of the system of the two governments of Earl Camden and Lord Cornwallis. For many interesting facts and assertions upon this subject, the reader is referred to the postliminious preface to the Historical Review of the State of Ireland, published in 1804. He will there find, that the author was assured by the prime minister of that day (Lord Sidmouth), that it was an identity of spirit and principle applicable to the varying circumstances of a rising, raging, and expiring rebellion. And he *very significantly assured the author, that he knew not the*

On the 28th of June General Lake was recalled from Wexford, and General Hunter appointed in his stead, to the inexpressible joy of the surviving inhabitants. The main body of the Wexford insurgents, reckoned to be fifteen thousand, had directed their march, under Father John Murphy, into Carlow, with intention to penetrate into Kilkenny, in hopes of raising the colliers about Castlecomer, who had been in a state of disturbance in the year 1793. Upon entering the gap, they dispersed some troops, who opposed their progress, and defeated a body of the 4th dragoon guards, and of the Wexford militia, who disturbed their passage over the river Barrow; some few were killed, and twenty-seven taken prisoners, of whom seven condemned as Orangemen* were shot.

1798.

Recal of
General
Lake, and
appoint-
ment of
General
Hunter.

grounds, views, or motives of Lord Cornwallis' actions. The author has in his possession a letter from Lord Cornwallis, in which his lordship says, *his sentiments with regard to Ireland were well known by the measures he pursued, and those which he recommended.* The reader will, under these opposite assumptions, mark the conduct of this noble viceroy, throughout his administration, with double interest and caution.

* Notwithstanding the constant charges of this contest having become a religious war, it must be allowed, that to the last the cordial enmity of the rebels was to the *Orangeman*, and not to the Protestant. Even Sir Richard Musgrave affords evidence of this as late as the day, on which the rebels evacuated Wexford, from a certificate, which he says was given on that day by Father Broe.

"I hereby certify that A. of B. in the parish of C. has done his duty, and proved himself a Roman Catholic, and has made a voluntary oath, that he never was an *Orangeman*, nor took the *Orange oath*.

"Dated Wexford, June 21, 1798.

F. JOHN BROE."

1798.

Major-general Sir Charles Asgill, who had marched with a force of about a thousand men to seize the post of New-bridge, arrived too late to stop the progress of the rebel army, which by a rapid movement had pre-occupied that post, where they passed the night. On the next morning that general arrived too late to protect the town of Castlecomer, upon which the rebels descended from the heights, having in their route defeated a body of about two hundred and fifty men at Coolbawn. The town was set on fire, and of this conflagration each party accuses the other. In the morning of the 25th of June, having taken post at a place called Kilcomny, they were assailed by a force of nearly twelve hundred men, under General Sir Charles Asgill, and that of Major Matthews, of about five hundred, from Maryborough. After an hour's firing of cannon, the rebels, fearing to be surrounded, fled towards the gap with their usual celerity, leaving all their plunder and artillery behind them. Their artillery consisted of ten light pieces, and among the articles of plunder were seven hundred horses. They forced their way back to the mountains of Wicklow. The other body of Wexford insurgents being joined by the forces under Mr. Garret Byrne, made an unsuccessful attack upon Hacketstown, and finding it impracticable to effect their design, without cannon, of which they had not a single piece, retreated from the place, after an action of nine hours. During the engagement a considerable force of our cavalry and infantry stood on a hill at a small distance, in view of the scene of action, but did not join in the battle.

Shortly after they surprized a corps of the Ancient British, and Ballaghkeen cavalry; of whom they slew about eighty without losing a single man. On the 2d of July, they were pursued by a body of yeoman cavalry and infantry, before whom they retired to an eminence, called Ballyrakeen-hill. Here they took post. As the yeomen moved up the hill, the insurgents poured upon them with such impetuosity, that they were in an instant utterly discomfited, with the loss of seventy privates and two officers. The cavalry escaped by flight.

The first prominent act of Marquis Cornwallis, to put a close to the system of blood and terror, was a proclamation* authorizing his majesty's generals to give protection to such insurgents as, being simply guilty of rebellion, should surrender their arms, abjure all unlawful engagements, and take the oath of allegiance to the King. How necessary at that time such a step was, could be a question of no difficulty to those, who viewing dispassionately the state of affairs, considered what numbers had been seduced into the conspiracy by artifice, and forced into rebellion by unfortunate circumstances. To give the full sanction of law to that necessary measure, a message was delivered from his excellency to the house of commons,

1798.

First act of
the change
of system.

* The form of it, together with the certificate and oath, are to be seen in my Historical Review, vol. III. p. 773. It was published in the Dublin Gazette only on the 3d of July: but as it bears date the 29th day of June, 1798, it was probably communicated to General Lake before publication, as that general left Wexford on the 26th.

1798.

on the 17th of July, signifying his Majesty's pleasure to that effect; and an act of amnesty was accordingly passed in favor of all engaged in the rebellion, who had not been leaders, who had not committed manslaughter, except in the heat of battle, and who should comply with the conditions mentioned in the proclamation.

Final dispersion of the Wexford insurgents.

The Wexford insurgents had fixed their station near the White Heaps, at the foot of Croghan Mountain; whence they moved, during the night of the 4th of July, toward Wicklow Gap; but on the morning of the 5th, the army under Sir James Duff from Carnew, under cover of a thick fog, surrounded them in four powerful divisions, before they could perceive the approach of any enemy. Finding themselves unable to withstand a battle, they broke through the pursuing cavalry, of whom they slew about eighty, and moved with their usual velocity in the direction of Carnew. Upon their arrival at Ballygullen, they resolved to await the approach of the troops, and try the issue of a battle. Their force was then considerably reduced. They maintained the contest for an hour and a half with the utmost intrepidity. They repulsed the cavalry, and drove the artillerymen three times from their guns; but fresh reinforcements of the army pouring in on all sides, they were obliged to give way, quitting the field of battle with little loss to themselves, and notwithstanding their fatigue, retreated with stupendous celerity in different directions. They assembled again at Carrigrew, where upon considering the reduced state of their forces and the ad-

vantages gained by the army, they thought it advisable to disperse, and thus put an end to the warfare in the county of Wexford. 1798.

The cessation of hostilities unfortunately did not close the miseries of that devoted district: a bloody and vindictive spirit seized upon many of the gentlemen of that county, and was carried into effect with outrageous barbarity. Their former claims to respectability in life for a length of time gave credit to their falsehood, procured countenance to their fanaticism, and secured them the means of executing injustice. * General Lake, previous to his departure from Wexford, had appointed a committee to superintend prosecutions, and to grant passes to leave the country, consisting of the principal gentlemen then resident there. The appropriate duty of this body was to enquire specially into the cases of such prisoners, as they should hand over to be tried by court-martial, to procure evidence for prosecution, and to commit different persons to gaol. It was not, however, deemed necessary to send a committal to a jailer, as the word of any of them was considered sufficient for the detention of any of those given in custody. They were also to act as a kind of council to General Hunter, whose benevolent disposition they thwarted in many instances. This was in fact so well known, that many, upon being put into confinement, were induced, by their apprehensions, to petition for transportation, rather than abide a trial under their direction. The

Inquisitorial
court of
Wexford.

* Hay's History of the Insurrection of Wexford, p. 266.

1793. tyrannical, unjust, and inhuman disposition of this body is strongly exemplified in their unwarrantable treatment of many, besides the writer and eye-witness of the insurrection of Wexford, which he has detailed in his preliminary discourse*.

* The quotation I have made from this author, as an eye-witness and a most aggrieved sufferer under this persecuting spirit of the Wexford O'angemen, seems to baffle all possibility of refutation. The unparalleled and almost incredible instances, which Mr. Hay details of his own sufferings from this inquisitorial court in the introduction to his history, chill the blood of the reader. Yet as they necessarily excite indignation against all supporters of the system, it becomes more candid to name such as the author has given to the public, than to permit the foul imputation to light upon the gentry of the county at large: "*(Introd. xxviii.)* Six magistrates of the county afterwards formed themselves into an inquisitorial court, consisting of the Right Honorable George Ogle, James Boyd, Richard Newton King, Edward Percival, Ebenezer Jacob, M. D. and John Henry Lister, Esquires. They assembled at the house of James Boyd, and summoned hundreds before them, whom they swore to give such information as they could concerning the rebellion. About fifty persons have informed me, that they were principally questioned concerning me; so that I have strong reason to believe, that no means were left untried to criminate me. My conduct has certainly undergone stricter investigation than that of any other person in Ireland, and such as, I believe, that of the most unexceptionable of my persecutors would not pass through unblemished; while mine is irreproachable in the utmost degree, having passed with unimpeached honor the ordeal of the Wexford inquisition. We read of nothing, that has gone such lengths in foreign countries. Even the inquisitors are, by duty and oath, to seek out all evidence as well for as against their prisoners!" Amongst the victims devoted to the violence of the times was the Rev. John Redmond, who had been prominently zealous in en-

A party of insurgents in the county of Kildare, under the command of Mr. William Aylmer, still held out in arms. Thither the remaining body of the Wexford men, commanded by Mr. Fitzgerald, accompanied by Mr. Garret Byrne, and some Wicklow men, directed their course and formed a junction, but were stopped in their progress at Clonard by a body of troops from Kinnegad and Mullingar, which forced them to retreat. After this repulse the few remaining Wexford men separated from their Wicklow associates, whom they deemed less warlike than themselves, and made different incursions into the counties of Kildare, Meath, Louth and Dublin, eluding, as well as they could, the pursuit of the army, with different parties, of which they had several skirmishes. They were finally routed and intercepted by Captain Gordon of the Dumfries light dragoons, at the head of a strong party of horse and foot, at Ballyboghil, near Swords, and never again collected. Some Wexford insurgents, however, remained with Mr. Fitzgerald and Mr. Aylmer, who, as outstanding chiefs, negociated with General Dundas, to whom they surrendered on the 12th of July, on condition, that all the other leaders, who had adventured with them, should be at liberty to retire whither they pleased out of the British dominions. The same terms were afterwards secured by General Moore to

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Dispersion
and sur-
render of
the out-
standing in-
surgents.

deavouring to protect the house of Lord Mountnorris from plunder. The particulars of his case are fully retailed in my *Historical Review*, partly from Mr. Gordon, and partly from Dr. Caulfield, vol. III. p. 776.

1798. Mr. Garret Byrne, who was sent into confinement in the castle of Dublin, together with Messrs. Fitzgerald and Aylmer, by which they fared much better than those, who laid down their arms in Wexford, depending on the faithful fulfilment of the terms entered into with Lord Kingsborough.

Terms of
surrender
proposed
through
Mr. Dobbs.

The plan of proposing terms for saving the lives of Mr. Oliver Bond and Mr. Byrne was brought forward by Mr. Dobbs, a member of parliament. That gentleman, with the sheriff, went to the prison, in which Mr. A. O'Connor was confined, on the 24th of July, with a paper *, signed by seventy state-prisoners, purposing to give such information as was in

* The following was the agreement signed by seventy-three on the 29th of July, 1798, “ That the undersigned state prisoners, “ in the three prisons of Newgate, Kilmainham, and Bridewell, “ engage to give every information in their power, of the whole “ of the internal transactions of the United Irishmen, and that “ each of the prisoners shall give detailed information of every “ transaction, that has passed between the United Irishmen and “ foreign states ; but that the prisoners are not, by naming or “ describing, to implicate any person whatever, and that they “ are ready to emigrate to such country, as shall be agreed on “ between them and government, and give security not to re- “ turn to this country without the permission of government, “ and not to pass into an enemy's country, if on their so doing “ they are to be freed from prosecution, and also Mr. Oliver “ Bond be permitted to take the benefit of this proposal. The “ state-prisoners also hope, that the benefit of this proposal may “ be extended to such persons in custody, or not in custody, as “ may chuse to benefit by it.”

Signed by seventy-three persons.

29th of July, 1798.

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their power, of arms, ammunition, their schemes of warfare, the internal regulations and foreign negotiations of the United Irishmen, provided the lives of Messrs. Bond and Byrne should be spared. In consequence of this agreement, some of the rebel chiefs, who were still in arms, among whom was Mr. Aylmer of Kildare, surrendered themselves *. Several principals of the Union, particularly Arthur O'Connor, Thomas Addis Emmett, Dr. M'Neven, and Samuel Neilson, gave details on oath in their examinations before the secret committees of the two houses of parliament, in whose reports published by authority of government is contained a mass of information

* In a pamphlet, stiled *A Letter from Arthur O'Connor, to Lord Castlereagh*, dated from prison, January the 4th, 1799, that minister is directly charged with a violation of the contract, and a misrepresentation to parliament of the transactions between him and the prisoners of state. Other charges are made, one of which is, that the information given by these prisoners to government, was garbled to serve the purposes of the ministry, and particularly, that of a hundred pages, delivered by O'Connor himself, only one had been published in the reports of the secret committees. His lordship is peremptorily challenged to disprove any of the charges in the pamphlet. No reply has appeared. The boldness and notoriety of the charges made by a prisoner whilst in the power of government stand in competition with the honour and veracity of Lord Castlereagh. Mr. O'Connor asserts, that Lord Castlereagh in their first conference assured him, that Lord Cornwallis's honour was pledged to them for the religious performance of the agreement; and that Lord Clare made use of these remarkable expressions: (p 9) "It comes to this, either you must trust the government, or the government must trust you: a government that could violate engagements thus solemnly made, neither could stand nor deserved to stand."

1798.

concerning the conspiracy. Yet certain it is, that whatever might have been the original terms of the contract, and by whatever subsequent events the contractors might have been influenced or affected, the principal prisoners (15 in number) were not liberated, and a power was reserved or assumed by ministers to detain them in custody, at least during the continuance of the war with France. Oliver Bond died in the mean time in prison of an apoplexy.

Trial and
execution
of several
rebel chiefs.

The trials and executions of some of the principal leaders in the rebellion tended to prevent further attempts of individuals in that desperate cause. On the 12th of July, Henry and John Sheares were brought to trial, condemned, and soon after put to death. The trial of John M'Cann, who had been secretary to the provincial committee of Leinster, followed on the 17th; that of Michael William Byrne*, delegate from

* Of the execution of Byrne, Mr. O'Connor thus speaks in his letter to Lord Castlereagh. "On the 24th of July last, Mr. Dobbs and the sheriff entered my prison with a written paper, signed by seventy state-prisoners, purposing 'to give such information as was in their power of arms, ammunition, and schemes of warfare, (of which it is now manifest they knew little or nothing) and to consent to leave Ireland, provided the lives of Bond and Byrne (both under sentence of death) should be spared.' I refused to sign it, not only from a detestation of entering into any conditions with those, who composed the councils of Lord Cornwallis's administration, but because in the massacre of my unarmed countrymen still raging, I did not think that any object, which was not general, could warrant me, in whom such confidence was placed by so many millions of my countrymen, to enter into any such compact, and because the possibility of its being attributed to a desire to save my own life, in the peculiar

the county committee of Wicklow, and that of Oliver Bond, on the 23d. The two former were executed, the third was reprieved, as has been mentioned.

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Some of the more desperate rebels, reinforced by deserters from some regiments of Irish militia, remained in arms in the mountains of Wicklow, and the dwarf woods of Killaughram, near Enniscorthy. These desperate banditti, who had stiled themselves Babes of the Wood, compelled the neighbouring inhabitants to take refuge in towns. The woods were scoured by the army, and cleared of their predatory inhabitants, and tranquillity was restored to that part of the country. The party in the Wicklow mountains, whose range and haunts were much more extensive and difficult of access, continued under two chiefs of the names of Holt and Hacket, to annoy the country for a longer time, and in a more formidable degree; issuing suddenly from their fastnesses to perpetrate burnings and massacres, and retiring before troops could arrive to intercept them. Harassed incessantly by the pursuit of the yeomen and soldiery, the numbers of the banditti

Some straggling desperadoes infest the country.

situation I stood in, was in my mind an insuperable objection, if there had been no other. Besides, it seemed, that to save the lives of Bond and Byrne, enough had signed their self-sacrifice to induce the ministers, already sated with blood, (as you and Lord Clare appeared to be when we met) to acquiesce; but in this I was deceived; a council sat on the fate of Byrne—he was executed. In this barter of blood, although you had lessened your *quantum* by half, yet you raised your demands for the price of the other, and proposed to those, who had signed the paper, that they should deliver up names.”

1798. gradually diminished. Hacket was killed near Arklow. Holt surrendered for transportation to the Earl of Powerscourt; and these bands of robbers at length totally disappeared.

Royal message to parliament.

Notwithstanding the disastrous state of the country, the parliament ceased not to sit from time to time, as exigencies required. On the 17th of July, Lord Castlereagh presented, to the house of commons a message from his excellency, that his Majesty, ever disposed to exert as far as possible his royal prerogative of mercy, and to receive again under his royal protection those, who by the arts of wicked and designing men had been seduced from their allegiance, had signified his gracious intention of granting his general and free pardon for all offences committed on or before a certain day, upon such conditions, and with such exceptions, as might be compatible with the public safety; for carrying which benevolent purpose into execution, his Majesty has signified his gracious intention of sanctioning, in the usual form, by his royal signature, a bill for that purpose, previous to its being submitted to parliament for their concurrence. And that his Majesty had also directed his excellency to lay before them several important papers, relating to the rebellion. The message also recommended measures for ascertaining the losses of, and indemnifying the suffering loyalists; and pledged unceasing activity and vigor against such, as should remain in arms against his Majesty's peace. This message was ordered to be entered on the journals, and to be re-

ferred to a secret committee of thirteen, including the speaker and the law officers of the crown, before which the papers mentioned in the message were laid. 1798.

The attorney-general on the 17th of the month brought forward a bill for the attainder of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Cornelius Grogan, and Beauchamp Bagenal Harvey deceased: for which purpose several witnesses were examined at the bar. Similar proceedings were also had in the house of lords. This act of severity, and supplementary vengeance upon the unoffending widow and orphan, appeared to many rather the posthumous issue of the late, than the genuine offspring of the present system. A bill of general amnesty was passed in the course of the session, with the exception of Mr. Napper Tandy, and about thirty others, chiefly fugitives in France. A bill was also passed for granting compensation to such of his Majesty's loyal subjects, as had sustained losses in their property, in consequence of the late rebellion, and commissioners were named for carrying it into effect.

Acts of attainder, amnesty, and indemnification.

The system of moderation and mercy pursued by Lord Cornwallis was particularly seasonable at this crisis, particularly in the county of Wexford. General Hunter was indefatigable in his exertions to restore confidence to the people; in which he was aided by the judicious and zealous exertions of Major Fitzgerald, who by the special appointment of the British government, was sent over to Ireland to act under the commander in chief, in the laudable work of doing impartial justice and quieting the minds of his Majesty's subjects. The country people were

System of moderation introduced by Lord Cornwallis.

1798.

generally deterred from applying for protection, as the yeomen continued with indiscriminate barbarity to fire the cabins and shoot every inhabitant that moved out of them: the melancholy consequence of which had nearly brought on the extermination of an extensive and populous tract of the county of Wexford, called the Macomores. Applications, supported by affidavits, had been made to government, by different magistrates in Gorey and its vicinity, complaining, that this range of country was infested with constant meetings of rebels, who committed every species of outrage; the viceroy crediting the magistrates was justly indignant, that his clemency was abused; and orders were sent to the different generals and other commanding officers, contiguous to the devoted tract, to form a line along its extent on the western border, and at both ends, north and south, on the land side, so as to leave no resource to the wretched inhabitants, who were to be indiscriminately slaughtered by the soldiery, or driven into the sea. The execution of this severe and exemplary measure was fortunately entrusted to the discretion of General Hunter, who, through the honest exertions of Major Fitzgerald, discovered, in time, the inhuman tendency of the misrepresentation, that had produced these terrific orders. Whenever any of the inhabitants of this district attempted to stir out of it to obtain protection, the soldiery and yeomanry waited their return in ambush, and slaughtered every one they could overtake. They made incursions into the country, fired into the houses, and never failed to aim at every living creature, that

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ventured abroad. By the frequency of these outrages, such houses as remained unburned were of course crowded with several families; and this aggregation encreased at each succeeding incursion. At last most of the inhabitants from necessity took refuge on the hills, and armed themselves with every weapon they could procure. Major Fitzgerald went into the midst of this harassed peasantry, ensured them protection from military depredators and murderers, and no subjects could be more loyal and subordinate.

Mr. Hawtrey White, captain of the Ballaghkeen cavalry, and a justice of the peace for the county, gave such specific and alarming information to government, as induced the commanding officer at Gorey to quit the town, and encamp on a hill above it. Major Fitzgerald enquired into and reported the information unfounded. Upon this Mr. Hawtrey White was ordered to Wexford, and put under arrest; on his persisting in his information, he was conducted to the spot (an island) where he asserted the rebels were encamped. No such island, however, was to be discovered. Mr. Hawtrey White was conducted back to Wexford, and General Hunter determined to bring him to a court-martial. Many gentlemen and ladies interfered to prevent such investigation, representing that Mr. White's age might have subjected him to the imposition of fabrications: and the firmness of the general gave way to solicitation. Notwithstanding Lord An-cram, and after him Sir James Fowtis, acted as presidents of courts martial with the utmost honour and integrity, which inspired confidence throughout the

Effects of
false infor-
mation.

1798.

country, and induced many, who were conscious of their integrity, to submit to trial, which they would not otherwise have dared to do; yet in too many instances elsewhere the grossest perjuries were encouraged against truth and justice, to the shedding of much innocent blood *.

* As to this Mr. Hay instances in the execution of Mr. Kearney, a brewer, for attending the execution of some soldiers, at the distance of 30 miles from Wexford, and the burning of the barn at Scullagoogue, when he was actually in prison at Wexford, and seen there on the very day and hour, to which the false witnesses swore. He recounts the like execution of a Mr. Devereux at Cork, whose trial is published, after which the perjured witnesses informed against another person of the same name alleging, that they had now discovered the right Mr. Devereux. It will be satisfactory to the reader to learn the character of Mr. Hay's history from Major Fitzgerald, who had such ample means of knowing the truth.

“ Dublin, December 14, 1802.

“ SIR,

“ I RETURN, with my thanks for your polite attention, the manuscripts you were so kind as to leave for my perusal. Am exceedingly glad to find, through the whole of your compilation, so strict an observance of facts, which chiefly came under my cognizance as brigade-major. It is with pleasure I observe also your adherence to truth and impartiality, free from the rancorous spirit of party-fabrication, which is the true criterion, that exalts the historian above the class of party scribes, who dissipate as rapidly as unerring truth unveils itself, strongly exemplified in the past and present times. I give you much credit in not retarding, as you might for your unremitted sufferings, by exposing the crimes of some respectable persons; for, indeed, if they are not very forgetful and very insensible, the compunctions of their consciences must be sufficiently tor-

Happy for the interests of the British empire the French government was at that moment in the hands of feeble politicians, who, though well acquainted with the state of Ireland, had unaccountably neglected to avail themselves of it. With that lazy afterthought, that marks the folly of a bad statesman, the French detached a small force to the North of Ireland, under the command of General Humbert, who on the 22d of August landed at Killala. They entered the bay under English colours, and the feint succeeded so well *, that two sons of the Bishop of Killala, who had thrown themselves into a fishing boat, were presently surprised to find themselves prisoners. The whole armed force in the place did not exceed fifty men, all protestants. About eight on that evening a terrified messenger announced to the bishop, that 300 of the French were within a mile of the town. The cavalry officers rode off directly to Ballina. The yeomanry and fencibles drew up before the castle gate, but seeing two of their corps fall, they were seized with a panic and fled. Nineteen yeomen were taken and ordered into close custody at the castle. The French general marched into the castle-yard at the head of his officers, and

1798.
Humbert
lands at
Killala.

“menting. There is little doubt of your labours meeting their
“due reward from an unprejudiced public, which is the wish of

“Your obedient humble servant,

“B. E. FITZGERALD.”

“To Edward Hay, Esq.

* See the Bishop of Killala's interesting and authentic narrative of this transaction throughout.

1798.

assured the bishop, that he and his people should be treated with respectful attention, and that nothing should be taken by the French troops, but what was absolutely necessary for their support; a promise which, as long as those troops continued in Killala, was religiously observed. The bishop's castle was made the head-quarters of Humbert, who on the morning after his arrival began his military operations by pushing forward to Ballina a detachment of one hundred men, forty of whom he had mounted on the best horses he could seize. A green flag was mounted over the castle gate, with the inscription *Erin go Bragh*, importing an invitation to the country people to join the French. Their cause was to be forwarded by the immediate delivery of arms, ammunition, and clothing to the new levies of the country. Property was to be inviolable. Ready money was to come over in the ships expected every day from France. In the mean time, whatever was bought was paid for in drafts on the future directory. The first 1800 of the natives, that offered their service received complete clothing. The next 1000 received arms and clothing, but no shoes or stockings. Arms were given to 5500.


Humbert
puts General
Lake to
flight at
Castlebar.

Humbert left Killala with a quantity of ammunition in the possession of 200 men and six officers, and on the 25th took possession of Ballina, whence the garrison fled on his approach. The next morning, with eight hundred of his own men, about fifteen hundred Irish, and two small curricule guns, he advanced over the mountains to Castlebar, by ways generally deemed impassable to an army. The French

1798.

were at seven o'clock within two miles of the town, before which our army had taken their position on a rising ground. Our artillery at first made such execution among the French, that they instantly fell back some paces. They then filed off in small parties to the right and left, and assailed our troops in flank, who had scarcely fired a second round, when the royal army seized with a panic broke on all sides, and fled in extreme confusion through the town on the road to Tuam. General Lake is reported to have given an order for retreating, although he had under him 6000 men *. Such was the panic of our troops on this fatal occasion, that they never halted till they reached the town of Tuam, nearly forty English miles from the scene of action. Our loss in artillery consisted of fourteen pieces, of which four were currie guns : of that of the cara-

* This disgraceful conduct of our troops in the face of so small a force has been variously represented by different writers, whose motives we cannot develop. The Bishop of Killala thus evades direct censure. (Narrative, p. 45.) "The writer of this narrative professes only to describe what he saw and felt. It is not his business therefore, if he were competent to the task, to trace the events of an invasion, the first successes of which caused so much astonishment, or to shew by what means a handful of men continued so long to brave the force of a whole kingdom ; men, who, from the time they missed their reinforcements from home, confessed their belief, that they were no more than a forlorn hope sent to annoy the enemies of their country ; and, that duty done, expected every hour to be forced to surrender themselves prisoners of war."

1798.  bineers, no return was made; -our loss of men was never stated, nor that of the French ever known.

Lord Corn-
wallis
marches
against the
enemy.

The Marquis Cornwallis, from the first intelligence of the invasion, had, notwithstanding the smallness of the invading army, been so sensible of the danger of rekindling the smothered flame of rebellion, as to have determined to march in person against the enemy, with so formidable a force, as effectually to intimidate the abettors of rebellion in the country, he was about to march through. He arrived on the 4th of September at Hollymount, fourteen miles from Castlebar, where he received intelligence, that the enemy had abandoned his post and marched to Foxford. After the victory at Castlebar, the French received great accessions of Irish peasantry to their standard, who encreased indeed the numbers of the enemy, but proved of no effectual aid: they had been taught to expect far more powerful co-operation from the Irish.

Progress of
the French
general.

The advanced guard of the French at Coloony, received an important check from Colonel Vereker, of the city of Limerick Militia, who had marched from Sligo with about two hundred infantry, thirty dragoons, and two curricule guns. After an action of about an hour, he was obliged to retreat, with the loss of his artillery, to Sligo, whence he withdrew his little army to Ballyshannon. This opposition is supposed to have caused the French general to relinquish his design on Sligo. He directed his march by Drummahair toward Manorhamilton in the county of Leitrim, having for the sake of expedition, left three

six-pounders dismounted on the road, and thrown five pieces of artillery into the river at Drummahair. In approaching Manorhamilton he suddenly wheeled to the right, taking his way by Drumkerim, perhaps with design, if possible, of reaching Granard in the county of Longford, where an alarming insurrection had taken place. Crawford's troops hung so close on the rear-guard of the French, as to come to action with it on the 7th, between Drumshambo and Ballynamore, in which they were repulsed with some loss. The French are said to have mistaken this force for the van-guard of the British army, and to have been thereby prevented from attempting to surround it.

The French army passing the Shannon at Ballintra, arrived at Ballinamuck on the 8th of September, so closely followed by the troops of Colonel Crawford and General Lake, that its rear guard was unable to destroy the bridge at Ballintra, to impede the pursuit; while Lord Cornwallis, with the grand army, having crossed the same river at Carrick-on-Shannon, marched by Mohill to Saint-Johnstown, in the county of Longford, in order to intercept the enemy in front, on their way to Granard; or should they proceed, to surround them with an army of thirty thousand men. In this desperate situation, Humbert arranged his forces, with no other object, as it must be presumed, than to maintain the honor of the French arms. The rear-guard having been attacked by Colonel Crawford, about two hundred of the French infantry surrendered. The rest continued to defend themselves for above half an

1798.

The French
surrender.

1798. hour, when, on the appearance of the main body of General Lake's army, they also surrendered, after they had made Lord Roden, and a body of dragoons prisoners. His lordship had precipitately advanced into the French lines to obtain their surrender. The rebel auxiliaries, who had accompanied the French to this fatal field, being excluded from quarter, fled in all directions: five hundred of them were killed in the pursuit; about one thousand escaped. The loss of our troops was officially stated at three privates killed, twelve wounded, three missing, and one officer wounded. The troops of General Humbert were found, when prisoners, to consist of seven hundred and forty-six privates, and ninety-six officers, having sustained a loss of about two hundred men since their landing at Killala on the 22d of August*. The remaining efforts of the rebels, were an unsuccessful attempt to seize the town of Granard. Their plan was in case of success to attack the town of Cavan, where considerable stores of arms and ammunition

* As it is within the possibilities of this eventful era, that an invasion may be attempted either in Ireland or Great Britain, it may be useful to reflect, that in the heart of an armed kingdom a pitiful detachment of eleven hundred French infantry, routed a select body of six thousand men posted to receive them, provided themselves with ordnance and ammunition from our stores, took several towns, marched 150 miles through a country, in which there was an army of 150,000 men, and kept arms in their hands for seventeen days. But it was that army, which the untemperish and gallant Abercrombie had, on the 26th of the preceding February, found in such a state of licentiousness, that must render it formidable to every one but the enemy.

1798.

were deposited. In the county of Mayo, where they had first risen to assist the invaders, they still persevered in a state of insurrection. Castlebar, which on its evacuation by the French, had been occupied by the King's troops, was also unsuccessfully attacked by a body of two thousand rebels. On the 22d of September, thirty-two days after the landing of the French force, and fifteen after its capture at Ballinamuck, a body of twelve hundred men with five pieces of cannon, arrived at Killala, under the command of Major General Trench. After a more spirited, than judicious resistance for about half an hour, the rebels were forced to disperse. In the action and flight they lost about four hundred men. The town of Killala, thus recovered by his Majesty's forces, had been 32 days in the possession of the French and rebels*. The court-martial began the day after the battle, and sat in the house of Mr. Morrison. It had to try seventy-five prisoners at Killala, and a hundred and ten at Ballina, besides others, who might be brought in daily. The two first persons tried at this tribunal were General Bellew and Mr. Richard Bourke. Their trial was short. They were found guilty in the evening, and hanged the

* Of the transactions, which occurred at Killala during that period, the bishop's candid narrative is a most interesting and authentic historical document, and extremely honorable to the writer. It evinces a genuine goodness of heart, and a mind so cultivated, so candid, so elevated above vulgar prejudices and the servile fear of party, as to discern and publicly acknowledge the virtues of an enemy.

1798. next morning. Roger Macguire was found guilty, but remanded to prison, and afterwards transported to Botany Bay. His father, the brewer, was hanged; some others were executed. Thus ended the rebellion, or, more properly speaking, the various insurgencies in Ireland in the year 1798, in which, according to the most probable accounts, the loss of the army amounted to 19,700; that of the rebels and fugitives exceeded 50,000.

Consequences of the rebellion.

The consequences and effects of the rebellion now put down, command attention to the progress towards that important event, the incorporate union of the two kingdoms, which so closely followed it. Fierce as was the contest during this unfortunate warfare, the parliament continued to legislate during the whole of its continuance. In the months of August and September the examination of the chiefs of the rebels went forward before the secret committees of both houses, and their reports were then published. Government was anxious, that these reports should gain universal credit. On the other side, advertisements appeared in the more popular prints cautioning the public against giving them credit. On the 6th of September, Lord Clare made a special report from the committee of secrecy founded on these advertisements, informing the house, that they had thought it their duty to examine Mr. A. O'Connor, Mr. Emmet, and Dr. M'Neven, with respect to such advertisements, in order to ascertain, whether they intended to contradict or retract any thing, which they had theretofore deposed before the committee. And their

1793.

Several examinations and oaths made and signed on that day, were submitted to the house*. Lord Cornwallis, anxious to convince the nation, that a real change of system was adopted by government, published a proclamation to that effect. Although this measure had not the desired success, yet was it not followed up by harshness or cruelty to inflame the expiring, or to provoke a new insurgency.

On the 6th of October the parliament was prorogued in the usual form, and his excellency delivered a very interesting speech from the throne†.

Prorogation of Parliament.

It could not be expected, that the sudden change of system should gratify the supporters of the late measures of coercion and blood. The most devoted friends of Lord Camden were the first to oppose and reprobate the measures of his successor. The Earl of Enniskillen, who ranked as a colonel in the army, had been a zealous advocate for rigor and severity. Disliked at first, Marquis Cornwallis soon became execrated by the Orangemen: they attempted to vilify him by the appellation of *Croppy Corny*. On the 13th of October a court-martial‡,

Cause of Lord Cornwallis being disliked by the Orangemen.

* 8 Lords' Journal, p. 171.

† It is to be seen, Hist. Rev. vol. III. p. 808.

‡ This court martial was holden in the barracks, at Dublin, by order of Lieutenant General Craig. Besides the president it consisted of

Major Brown, R. I. D.

Captain Irwin, Fermanagh.

Captain Ouge, ditto

Captain Carter, R. I. D.

Captain Leslie, Fermanagh

Lieutenant Summers, 68th.

The particulars of this moving case are retailed, Hist. Rev. vol. III. p. 810.

1798. of which the Earl of Enniskillen was the president, sat on the trial of Hugh Wollaghan, a yeoman, charged with the most atrocious murder of Thomas Dogherty. Every aggravating circumstance was fully proved. No attempt was made to contradict any part of the evidence, but a justification of the horrid murder was set up, as having been committed under an order of the commanding officer: that, if the yeomen should meet with any, whom they knew or suspected to be rebels, they needed not be at the trouble of bringing them in, but were to shoot them on the spot. That it was almost the daily practice of the corps to go out upon scouring parties*. This defence was confirmed by one private, one sergeant, and two lieutenants of yeomanry. Captain Archer swore, that he had always found Wollaghan a sober and diligent man; ready to obey his officers, and looked upon him as an acquisition to the corps. Captain Gore deposed in like manner, that it was the practice of the corps to scour the country with an officer, and verily believed the yeomen understood it was their duty to shoot any rebel they met with, or suspected to be such; and the deponent had heard, that other corps

* These scouring parties were so much matters of course, that it appears from the testimony of the officers on this trial, they were considered as acts of military duty: nay, so brutalized were many of these corps, that they spoke of them as a diversion, which they called partridge shooting and grouseing: they hunted, not unfrequently, with dogs in the brakes, hedges, ditches, and woods to spring any unfortunate peasant, that might have concealed himself from the fury of these blood hunters, whom they instantly shot.

had similar directions in other districts. Here the defence closed, and the court acquitted the prisoner. When the minutes of this court-martial in the usual way were laid before the lord-lieutenant, his excellency was pleased * to disapprove of the sentence,

1798.

* The following is the official letter to General Craig.

" Dublin Castle, 18th October, 1798:

" SIR,

" HAVING laid before the lord-lieutenant the proceedings of a general court-martial, held by your orders in Dublin Barracks, on Saturday the 13th instant, of which Colonel the Earl of Enniskillen is president, I am directed to acquaint you that his excellency entirely disapproves of the sentence of the above court martial, acquitting Hugh Wollaghan of a cruel and deliberate murder, of which, by the clearest evidence, he appears to have been guilty.

" Lord Cornwallis orders the court martial to be immediately dissolved, and directs that Hugh Wollaghan shall be dismissed from the corps of yeomanry in which he served, and that he shall not be received into any other corps of yeomanry in this kingdom.

" His excellency further desires, that the above may be read to the president and the members of the court-martial in open court.

" I have the honour to be,

" Sir,

" Your most obedient humble servant,

" H. TAYLOR, Sec.

" Lieut.-Gen. Craig, &c. &c.

" P. S. I am also directed, that a new court-martial may be immediately convened for the trial of such prisoners, as may be brought before them, and that none of the officers, who sat upon Hugh Wollaghan be admitted as members."

1798



dissolve the court martial, and incapacitate the members from sitting on any other.

Trial and
death of
Mr. Theobald Wolfe
Tone.

Mr. Theobald Wolfe Tone was properly the founder of the Irish Union, which terminated in the late fatal rebellion. After he had fled from the arm of justice in the year 1795, he was of all the Irish fugitives the most favored and attended to by the French government. He obtained a commission in their army. He was taken prisoner on board a frigate in the autumn of 1798, and brought to trial by court-martial on Saturday, the 10th of November. He appeared in court in his French uniform, and pleaded guilty to the crime, with which he stood charged; alleging, that what he had once done, he should be ashamed to deny. He then delivered in several documents, which proved his brevet for the rank of *chef de brigade*, and a letter of service, both having the signatures of the president of the French Directory and the minister of war. He expressed his desire to be indulged with death in the most honorable manner, the death of a soldier, and with the utmost dispatch to be shot by files of grenadiers, as were Charette and Sombreuil. The next evening he was informed, that he must suffer, on the next day as others taken in war against their King. He desperately attempted to anticipate the execution by cutting his own throat. A military surgeon pronounced the wound not mortal, though extremely dangerous. In the mean time a motion was made in his majesty's court of King's Bench, then sitting, to arrest execution, grounded on an affidavit sworn by the father of

the prisoner, that he had been tried, convicted, and sentenced to death, on a charge of high treason, before a court-martial, though he did not belong to his Majesty's army, while his Majesty's court of King's Bench was sitting, before which the prisoner might have been tried in the ordinary way. Mr. Curran moved for an *Habeas Corpus* to bring up the prisoner *instantly*, which was granted, but he could not be removed into court without danger of instant death. The return of the writ of *Habeas Corpus* was postponed for some days, during which he died. Thus ignominiously ended a man, whose qualities and talents, if rightly directed, would have graced the noblest cause.


1798.

Notwithstanding Ireland had suffered so much from the violence and cruelty of both parties, yet in defiance of the conciliatory exertions of the chief governor, in many parts of the kingdom, and particularly in the county of Wexford, the Orange associations were multiplied, and disunion, hatred, and religious acrimony increased upon the suppression of the rebellion *. The continuance and extension of Orang-

Increase of
Orangism,
and by what
means.

* There may be seen in the Historical Review, vol. III. p. 815, the proceedings in the King's Bench, upon an information against Messrs. White and Goring, two magistrates of the county of Tipperary, for obstructing loyal magistrates and officers in their endeavours to preserve the peace of the most turbulent parts of the county.

It appeared that to keep up a semblance of disturbance in the country, they procured and employed yeomen to fabricate pike handles, which they afterwards pretended to discover in consequence of secret information. That these corps of yeomanry

1798.  ism necessarily perpetuated religious differences, riveted disaffection, and sharpened rancour through the nation.

consisted of the indigent tenantry of their captain, to whom they paid rack-rents for lands holden of him, and had no other way of discharging their rents but by their pay, which the captain usually received and retained in discharge of his rent; and that they were kept on permanent duty for the purpose of procuring this permanent pay. That there was no appearance of tumult or insurrection in the country; but that these persons circulated false reports of it's disturbed situation, in order to answer their own purposes; that persons were taken up, detained in prison, and fined under the timber act for the concealment of these pike handles, which were afterwards discovered to have been hidden by the procurement of the persons, who found them.

The impunity, connivance, and countenance from the magistrates, and the acquittals of the guilty by Orange Juries and Orange Courts Martial, were attended with the worst of consequences, as appears in the case of *Doyle v. Fitzgerald*, which produced a degree of alarming provocation throughout that part of the country. The plaintiff was a respectable tradesman of Carrick upon Suyr, the defendant Mr. Thomas Judkin Fitzgerald, the sheriff of Tipperary. The plaintiff had been seized in the street by the defendant, in order to be flagellated. In vain did he urge his innocence, which was supported by some of the most respectable inhabitants of the place. He begged to have Captain Jephson sent for, the commander of the yeomanry, of which he was a member: that was refused. He offered to go to instant execution, if the least trace of guilt appeared against him on enquiry: that was also refused. Bail was offered to any amount for his appearance: No, says the sheriff; I know by his face that he is a traitor, a Carmelite scoundrel. The plaintiff was tied to the whipping post: he received one hundred lashes till his ribs appeared: he then had his breeches let down, and received fifty more lashes on his posteriors. The young man's innocence was afterwards established. He applied to a court of law for redress: the action was tried at Clonmell assizes: the facts were fully proved, and the defendant was acquitted by an Orange jury.

The systematic perseverance of Government in the wicked policy of dividing the country, by keeping up an English or Protestant ascendancy, had taken too deep root, to be suddenly moved by any system however plausibly or powerfully introduced. It was in the special commission from the British Cabinet to Marquis Cornwallis, to avail himself of every rising circumstance, to forward and bring about the important political measure of an union with Great Britain. A more arduous undertaking was never attempted. It produced instantly a new ferment in the public mind, and engaged every man having a stake in the kingdom in a new political contest. It commenced, however, in a moment, when the nerves of several of the members in both houses of parliament, as well as of others out of parliament, were from the shock of the late rebellion so much weakened, that they unconditionally gave up the exercise of any discretion upon the subject.

1798.

First attempt at
incorporated union.

For the last twenty years no political character on either side had ever touched upon the question of union, but in terms of marked reprobation. Waving all other considerations, it is manifest, that terror had produced an influence, which had not before operated upon many. Even before the fury of rebellion had subsided, the British ministry had recommended preparatory steps to enable the Irish government to introduce the proposal of a legislative union with plausibility and effect on the first favorable

New division of parties on the union.

1798.

opening. In pursuance of this recommendation, a pamphlet was written or procured to be written by Mr. Edward Cook, the under secretary of the civil department. It was published anonymously ; but was well understood to speak the sentiments of the British, as well as the new Irish administration. It was forced into extensive circulation, and artfully called on the Irish nation still terrified with the unallayed horrors of blood and carnage, to compare the cruelty and vindictive ferocity of the Irish yeomanry towards their countrymen, with the pacific, orderly, and humane conduct of the English militia, of which about eighteen regiments were then in that country. It magnified to excess the confidence, which the conciliatory conduct of their chief governor had inspired. This pamphlet was considered as a kind of official proclamation of the sentiments of government upon the question, and had no sooner appeared, than it produced a general warfare of the press, and threw the whole nation into a new division of parties.

Meeting of
the bar
against
union.

The most interesting public meeting upon the subject of the Union was that of the gentlemen of the Irish bar on the 9th of December, when Mr. Saurin opened the business. After stating the question, as to the measure and period of proposing it, when the country was but just delivered from a rebellion, the most savage, that had ever scourged a country, he moved, "That the measure of a legislative union of this kingdom and Great Britain is an innovation, which it would be highly dangerous and impro-

per to propose at the present juncture to this country.”

1798.

The motion after a long and animated debate, was carried by a majority of 134 ; 32 only opposed it.

A post assembly of the lord mayor, sheriffs, commons, and citizens of the city of Dublin was convened on the 17th of December; which referring to a variety of rumours, that were then in circulation, of an intended Union of Ireland with Great Britain, came to the following resolutions. “That by the spirited exertions of the people and parliament of Ireland, the trade and constitution thereof were settled on principles so liberal, that the nation had risen ever since rapidly in wealth and consequence. And, that having boldly defended the constitution in king, lords, and commons, against the open and secret abettors of rebellion, they were determined steadily to oppose any attempt, that might be made to surrender the free legislation of that kingdom, by uniting it with the legislature of Great Britain.” On the next day, at a numerous meeting of the bankers and merchants of the city of Dublin, (the Lord Mayor in the chair) the following resolutions were unanimously agreed to: “That since the renunciation of the power of Great Britain in the year of 1782 to legislate for Ireland, the commerce and prosperity of that kingdom had eminently encreased. That they attributed these blessings under Providence, and the gracious favour of their beloved sovereign, to the wisdom of the Irish parliament. That they looked with abhorrence on any attempt to deprive the people of Ireland of their parliament, and thereby of their constitutional right,

City of Dublin
against
Union.

1798.

and immediate power to legislate for themselves. That impressed with every sentiment of loyalty to their king, and affectionate attachment to British connexion, they conceived that, to agitate in parliament a question of the legislative Union between that kingdom and Great Britain, would be highly dangerous and impolitic."

National
ferment
about the
Union.

The question of a legislative Union with Great Britain, produced a fever in the public mind almost equal to that, which once raged upon the Irish Union. All means of proselytizing were resorted to by both parties. The news-journals henceforward teemed with essays, addresses, protestations, puffs, squibbs, censures, and encomiums on both sides of this great political question. Meetings were advertised of counties, baronies, parishes, and of every species of incorporation: religious discriminations indeed were not resorted to. Protestants, dissenters, and catholics in this instance, for the first time, were fairly amalgamated into the general mass, and marshalled themselves according to their interests or their convictions.

Various re-
solutions
against
Union.


The fellows of Trinity College, and such of the students as enjoyed scholarships, had also a meeting, the result of which was, a request, that the representatives of the University would oppose with firmness the projected Union. The gentry and freeholders of the county of Dublin met, and protested against an Union, as hostile to the rights, liberties, and independence of Ireland. The freeholders of the county of Westmeath declared against it, as calculated to "exhaust Ireland, and debase her from her conse-

quence and prosperity, and to increase the influence of the court in a formidable degree." The resolutions of a meeting at Galway were particularly strong; reprobating the attempts of the unionists as unconstitutional and arbitrary; denying the power of the representatives of the people to vote away the independence of the realm; condemning the transfer of the right of legislation to any foreign country, without the general consent of the people, as equivalent to a dissolution of the existing government, and as a proceeding which, from its tendency to anarchy, ought to be resisted; and stigmatizing, as enemies to their country, all the supporters of such a measure. Mr. Foster inspired his constituents in the county of Louth with his own repugnance to the measure. Numerous were the resolutions entered into and published by different meetings against it before the sitting of Parliament.

On the 22d of January, 1799, the parliament met according to the last prorogation, when his excellency in a very interesting speech upon this important occasion, recommended to their peculiar consideration the most effectual means of consolidating the strength, power, and resources of the two kingdoms. An address was moved in the lords, which as usual, was an echo of the speech. An amendment was proposed by Lord Powerscourt strongly tending to reprobate the measure of a legislative Union. Other motions of the like tendency, were afterwards made by Lords Glاندore and Bellamont, which were negatived by a divi-

1799.

Parliament
meets. Uni-
on proposed
and oppos-
ed in the
lords.

1799.  sion of 49 against 16. Fourteen of the minority protested*.

Debate in the commons, and a majority of one for the Union.

In the commons Lord Tyrone moved the address, by which he did not mean to pledge himself in any manner to support the Union. That question would stand upon its own merits. In this debate, which lasted 22 hours, almost every member spoke with more than ordinary interest and warmth. Upon the division the ministry carried it by a single vote†. During the whole of this first debate the avenues to the house were crowded with persons awaiting the result of the debate, which though the question were lost, was considered a victory by the Anti-Unionists, and proclaimed as such by various demonstrations of joy through the metropolis. Some insults were offered to members supposed to be Unionists, as they went into or came out of the house.

Second debate, in which the ministers had a majority of 6 against them.

When the address was reported, on reading such part of it, as related to Union, Sir L. Parsons objected to that part, which went to pledge the house, under metaphors to adopt the principle of a legislative Union between the two kingdoms. He therefore moved to reject the whole of the paragraph,

| | | |
|------------------|---------------|-----------|
| * Viz. Leinster, | Bellamont, | De Vesci, |
| Granard, | Mountcashell, | Wm. Down |
| Belvedere, | Kilkenny, | & Connor. |
| Arran, | Belmore, | Dunsany, |
| Charlemont, | Powerscourt, | Lismore, |

† A very minute report of this first debate is given in Hist. Rev. vol. III. p. 827 to 852.

which related to the subject. This motion brought on another most interesting debate, which closed in a division of 111 for the rejection against 106 who opposed it. The public exultation rose to a great height on this defeat of the ministry. The Unionists were every-where insulted by the lower orders of the people, and the popular journals were lavish in their panegyrics of the Anti-Unionists: printed lists of the voters were circulated gratis amongst the people, in order, as the superscription imported, that they might know their glorious and virtuous defenders, that every honest man might engrave their names and their services on his heart, and hand them down to his children's children*.

1799.

So sanguine was the British minister in his expectation of carrying the measure, that he would not even await the result of the deliberations of the Irish senate. Presuming on his strength in the Irish as much as in the British houses of parliament, he opened his plan of operations in both on the same day. On the 22d of January, 1799, a message from the sovereign was delivered to the British peers, by Lord Grenville, recommending an Union in the following terms. "His majesty is persuaded, that the unremitting industry, with which our enemies persevere in their avowed design of effecting the separation of Ireland from this kingdom, cannot fail to engage the particular attention of parliament: and his majesty

Union recommended by the King to the Parliament.

* This list is to be seen in Appendix to Historical Review, No. CXVI.

1799.

recommends it to this house to consider of the most effectual means of counteracting and finally defeating this design; and he trusts, that a review of all the circumstances, which have recently occurred (joined to the sentiments of mutual affection and common interest) will dispose the parliaments of both kingdoms to provide in the manner, which they shall judge most expedient, for settling such a complete and final adjustment, as may best tend to improve and perpetuate a connexion essential to their common security, and to augment and consolidate the strength, power, and resources of the British empire." This message having been read, Lord Grenville proposed, that it should be taken into consideration on the ensuing day, and the lords summoned, to which the house agreed. A similar message, on the same day, was presented to the commons by Mr. Dundas, who moved, that it should be considered on the morrow, which was agreed to.

King's
message
taken into
considera-
tion by the
British par-
liament.

On the following day Lord Grenville in the house of peers moved the order of the day for taking his Majesty's message into consideration; no debate occurred; and the peers voted an address of thanks for his Majesty's gracious communication, assuring him, that they would maturely deliberate on the subject recommended to their notice, and promote any adjustment for consolidating the general interests of the British empire. When Mr. Dundas moved for a like address in the commons, he observed, that it was then unnecessary to dwell on the subject, as a future day would be appointed for discussing it. But Mr. She-

1799.

ridan made a very animated speech against ministers bringing forward so precipitately a plan of Union, which he concluded by moving an amendment*, expressing the surprise and deep regret, with which the house learned from his Majesty, that the final adjustment, which upon his gracious recommendation took place between the kingdoms in the year 1782, and which, by the declaration of the parliaments of both countries, placed the connexion between them upon a solid and permanent basis, had not produced the effects expected from that solemn settlement; and also intimating, that his Majesty's faithful commons, having strong reason to believe, that it was in the contemplation of his ministers to propose an Union of the legislatures of the two kingdoms, notwithstanding the said adjustment, felt it to be their bounden duty, impressed as they were with the most serious apprehensions of the consequences of such a proceeding at this time, to take the earliest opportunity humbly to implore his Majesty not to listen to the counsel of those, who should advise or promote such a measure at the present crisis, and under the present circumstances of the empire. The debate upon this amendment continued with great warmth, and was closed by Mr. Pitt in the following words, "I see the case so plainly, and I feel it so strongly, that no apparent or probable difficulty, no fear of toil, or apprehension of a loss of popularity, shall deter me from making every exertion to accomplish the great work, on which, I am persuaded, depend the internal tranquillity of Ireland, the general

* 7 Parl. Reg. p. 592.

1799.

interest of the British empire, and perhaps the happiness of a great part of the habitable world." The question for the amendment having been rejected without a division, the address was immediately voted.

Mr. Pitt
proposes
resolutions
respecting
the Union.

On the 31st of January, the message having been again read, Mr. Pitt after a very elaborate speech in support of the grand object, which the sovereign had recommended, presented to the house eight resolutions, which he had prepared, embracing the general plan of the Union.

I. "In order to promote and secure the essential interests of Great Britain and Ireland, and to consolidate the strength, power, and resources of the British empire, it will be adviseable to concur in such measures, as may best tend to unite the two kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland into one kingdom, in such manner, and on such terms and conditions, as may be established by acts of the respective parliaments of his majesty's said kingdoms.

II. "It would be fit to propose as the first article, to serve as a basis of the said Union, that the said kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland shall, on a day to be agreed upon, be united into one kingdom, by the name of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

III. "For the same purpose it would be fit to propose, that the succession to the monarchy and the imperial crown of the said united kingdom, shall continue limited and settled, in the same manner, as the imperial crown of the said kingdoms of Great

Britain and Ireland now stands limited and settled, according to the existing laws, and to the terms of the Union between England and Scotland. 1799.

IV. "For the same purpose it would be fit to propose, that the said united kingdom be represented in one and the same parliament, to be stiled the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; and that such a number of lords spiritual and temporal, and such a number of members of the House of Commons, as shall be hereafter agreed upon by the acts of the respective parliaments as aforesaid, shall sit and vote in the said parliament on the part of Ireland, and shall be summoned, chosen, and returned, in such manner, as shall be fixed by an act of the parliament of Ireland previous to the said Union; and that every member hereafter to sit and vote in the said parliament of the united kingdom shall, until the said parliament shall otherwise provide, take, and subscribe the said oaths, and make the same declarations, as are by law required to be taken, subscribed, and made, by the members of the parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland.

V. "For the same purpose it would be fit to propose, that the churches of England and Ireland, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, shall be preserved as now by law established.

VI. "For the same purpose it would be fit to propose, that his majesty's subjects in Ireland shall at all times hereafter be entitled to the same privileges, and be on the same footing in respect of trade and navigation, in all ports and places belonging to Great

1799. Britain, and in all cases with respect to which treaties shall be made by his majesty, his heirs or successors, with any foreign power, as his majesty's subjects in Great Britain; that no duty shall be imposed on the import or export between Great Britain and Ireland of any articles now duty free; and that on other articles there shall be established, for a time to be limited, such a moderate rate of equal duties as shall, previous to the Union, be agreed upon and approved by the respective parliaments, subject, after the expiration of such limited time, to be diminished equally with respect to both kingdoms, but in no case to be increased; that all articles, which may at any time hereafter be imported into Great Britain from foreign parts, shall be importable through either kingdom into the other, subject to the like duties and regulations, as if the same were imported directly from foreign parts: that where any articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either kingdom, are subject to any internal duty in one kingdom, such countervailing duties (over and above any duties on import to be fixed as aforesaid) shall be imposed, as shall be necessary to prevent any inequality in that respect; and that all matters of trade and commerce, other than the foregoing, and than such others as may before the Union be specially agreed upon for the due encouragement of the agriculture and manufactures of the respective kingdoms, shall remain to be regulated from time to time by the united parliament.

VII. "For the like purpose it would be fit to pro-

pose, that the charge arising from the payment of the interest, or sinking-fund for the reduction of the principal of the debt incurred in either kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively; that, for a number of years to be limited, the future ordinary expenses of the united kingdom, in peace or war, shall be defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland jointly, according to such proportions as shall be established by the respective parliaments previous to the Union; and that, after the expiration of the time to be so limited, the proportion shall not be liable to be varied, except according to such rates and principles, as shall be in like manner agreed upon previous to the Union.

1799.

VIII. "For the like purpose it would be fit to propose, that all laws in force at the time of the Union, and all the courts of civil or ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the respective kingdoms, shall remain as now by law established within the same, subject only to such alterations or regulations from time to time, as circumstances may appear to the parliament of the united kingdom to require."

Mr. Pitt at the same time moved an address to accompany the resolutions, stating, that the commons had proceeded with the utmost attention to the consideration of the important objects recommended in the royal message; that they entertained a firm persuasion of the probable benefits of a *complete and entire* Union between Great Britain and Ireland, founded on equal and liberal principles; and

Address to
accompany
the resolu-
tions.

1799.

that they were therefore induced to lay before his majesty such propositions, as appeared to them to be best calculated to form the basis of such a settlement, leaving it to his wisdom, in due time and in a proper manner, to communicate them to the lords and commons of Ireland, with whom they would be at all times ready to concur in all such measures, as might be found most conducive to the accomplishment of that great and salutary work.

Mr. Sheridan opposes the minister, and proposes two resolutions.

Mr. Sheridan tenaciously persisted in opposing the conduct of the minister, and concluded a most animated speech, with proposing the two following resolutions, to which, he thought, no true friend of either country would object. "That no measures can have a tendency to improve and perpetuate the ties of amity and connexion now existing between Great Britain and Ireland, which have not for their basis the manifest, fair, and free consent and approbation of the parliaments of the two countries;" and "that whoever shall endeavour to obtain the appearance of such consent and approbation in either country, by employing the influence of government for the purpose of corruption or of intimidation, is an enemy to his majesty and the constitution." The house then divided upon the question for the speaker's leaving the chair, when the ayes were 140, the noes 15.

Mr. Sheridan renews his motion respecting the consent of both parliaments.

In confident assurance of final success, the minister allowed the interval of a week for the consideration of the resolutions he had submitted to the house, and on the 7th of February he proposed a full discussion of

1799.

the subject in a committee of the whole house, but before it was formed, he consented to dispose of Mr. Sheridan's motions respecting the fair and free consent of both parliaments. Mr. Sheridan then renewed his resolutions, which were disposed of by the minister's putting the previous question, which was carried upon a division of 141 against 25. A very interesting debate took place on the committee being formed for the discussion of Mr. Pitt's propositions, when the question for the Speaker's leaving the chair was carried by 149 against 24. A committee of the whole house was immediately formed, and the resolutions were moved and carried.

On the 11th of February, the minister having moved the order of the day for the house going into a committee for the further consideration of his majesty's message, Mr. Sheridan recommended a substitute for legislative union. He was of opinion, that the abolition of all disabilities, which had been incurred in civil affairs by religious distinctions, would tend more to the improvement of the connexion between Great Britain and Ireland, than the measure brought forward. He had the authority of the premier himself for the expediency of emancipating the Catholics of Ireland from the incapacities, to which they were subjected. Such was the opinion of the leaders of the cabinet in the year 1795; and, though Earl Fitzwilliam were not then desired or permitted to propose the emancipation, he is allowed to have been expressly authorized to give it a *handsome*

Mr. Sheridan proposes a substitute for Union.

1799. *support on the part of government.* He then moved, that it should be an instruction to the committee to consider “how far it would be consistent with justice and policy, and conducive to the general interests, and especially to the consolidation of the strength of the British empire, were all civil incapacities on account of religious distinctions to be done away throughout his majesty’s dominions.” Mr. Pitt objected to the proposition, as breaking in upon the independence of the Irish Parliament, by a direct act of dictation and control. He denied, that the rebellious disturbances in Ireland originated in any degree from the refusal to grant emancipation to the Catholics. The motion was rejected without a division.

Conference
of the two
houses
upon the
subject of
union.

When all the resolutions had been agreed to, the next proceeding was a communication of the votes of the commons to the lords at a conference, which took place on the 18th. The peers ordered the resolutions to be printed, and some illustrative papers to be produced. In order to avoid precipitancy on so important a subject, they allowed a month’s interval for consideration, before they entered upon the discussion.

Mr. Foster’s
popularity
for oppos-
ing the
union.

In Dublin the defeat of the minister in the House of Commons was considered as the death-blow of the Unionists, and was celebrated in every quarter of the city with bonfires and other demonstrations of joy. The violent opposition, which Mr. Foster gave to the measure, had suddenly translated him from very ge-

neral dislike, to the acme of popularity *. The lord mayor, aldermen, and common council, and a numerous body of merchants of Dublin, delivered addresses to him, as an honest man and lover of his country, for not voting away the liberty and independence of Ireland.

1799.

On the 28th of January Lord Castlereagh moved an adjournment to the 7th of February, in order to engraft his further parliamentary proceedings upon the issue and result of the debates in the British house of commons. Sir John Parnell opposed the motion, as there never was a moment, in which it was more necessary for the parliament of Ireland to remain vigilant at its post. There was a credited report, that the British minister had declared, *he would unceasingly persevere in a measure respecting the internal situation of Ireland*, to which the parliament of Ireland had so recently given its decided negative. It was impossible the British minister or parliament could have previously known the sentiments of the parliament of Ireland, when they had discussed the measure on the very same day it was rejected here. The British minister had too much wisdom to persevere, after the sense of the Irish parliament and Irish people were known to him, without putting in imminent hazard the continuance of British connexion. Lord Castlereagh persisted in his motion, declaring

Adjournment of the Irish parliament, in order to follow up the resolutions of the British parliament.

* The public proceedings of the county of Louth on the 14th, and of the city of Dublin on the 18th of January, 1799, are to be seen in the Appendix to Hist. Rev. No. CXVII.

1799.

Union to be a measure so indispensable to perpetuate the connexion between both kingdoms, to consolidate their mutual strength, and promote their mutual prosperity, that he should never lose sight of it; though he did not mean that he would, or could press it against the Irish parliament and the Irish people. After several gentlemen had spoken in the strongest terms against the Union, upon which the sense of that house had been unequivocally expressed, the question was carried in the affirmative without division. Lord Castlereagh then solemnly assured the house, that he should never bring forward the question of Union so long, as it appeared to him repugnant to the sense of parliament and the country. Colonel Maxwell Barry observed, the noble lord could not himself answer for what he might do, as he must act according to the instructions he received from England. He moved a call of the house, which was fixed for the 11th of February. Sir H. Cavendish, after having stated, that the house had been degraded by personal outrage and insult to several of its members, in consequence of votes given in that house, moved, "That any insult or assault offered to any member of parliament coming or going from that house, in consequence of any thing said or done in parliament; or any attempt to intimidate any member from any vote in that house; or any tumultuous assemblage of persons meeting in the passages to that house, to awe or intimidate its members, to or from any vote, or any measure, is an high infringement on the privileges of that house." The debate on the ne-

1799.

cessity for such resolutions, brought under the consideration of the house a ministerial determination to remove the parliament to Cork, in order to secure safety in its deliberations. Upon which the attorney-general said it was notorious, that the persons of members had been assaulted and abused, their houses attacked, and themselves declared traitors to their country, for having voted in favor of Union; and that certainly such attempts to overawe the parliament would warrant its removal to Cork. To confirm which was read a paragraph in a popular paper, calling the minister of the country and those members who voted for an Union "*a corrupt minister and his corrupt phalanx.*" Out of parliament, the viceroy applied the whole strength of the castle, to promote the grand object: he gained occasional proselytes. On the other hand he was strongly opposed by many even of his former friends, and found the decided majority of the nation (however desirous of a continuance of connexion) hostile to the measure of Union.

Meetings in the different counties were encouraged by the Anti-unionists; and strong resolutions adopted with few dissentient voices. The military commanders sometimes interfered, on pretence of preventing the intrusion and violence of the lower classes; and very frequently officers used menace and intimidation, in order to check free discussion. The freeholders of Fermanagh, King's County, Limerick, Monaghan, Clare, Cavan, Tyrone, and other shires, made strong resolutions against the measure, and thanked their members for opposing it; but,

Exertions
of the Anti-
unionists
in the
country.

1799. in the county of Galway, the archbishop of Tuam had interest enough to procure a warm declaration in favor of Union. In the commercial city of Cork great disunion prevailed, many of the traders and other inhabitants were zealous for the ministerial scheme. In opposition to them above 700 signed and published an address of thanks to the parliamentary Anti-unionists in general, and to the Earl of Charlemont and Mr. Foster in particular. While the public mind was in that state of agitation, the speech, which Mr. Pitt delivered on the 23d of January, was circulated through the nation with more than ordinary industry, and some of that minister's remarks, as interpreted by the Anti-unionists, increased the public ferment.

Parliament
meets after
adjourn-
ment.

When the Irish house of commons met according to adjournment, a complaint was made to the house of several paragraphs * in an English newspaper, under the immediate controul of the minister. This was considered by the Anti-unionists a part of the scheme of the British ministry to force the Union upon them, and they unanimously resolved, that those English newspapers, in which the false, scandalous, and malicious libels were contained and published, should be burned by the hands of the common hangman, in College Green, and that the sheriffs of Dublin should attend to see the same done accordingly. The horrors of the late rebellion had now given place to a

* These paragraphs may be seen in Historical Review, vol. III. p. 920.

1799

new irritation created by the question of Union: and the old means of proclaiming different districts in a state of disturbance were resorted to. The first county proclaimed to be in that state, was the County of Galway on the 12th of February, in which the earliest and most successful exertions had been made in favor of Union. This was conclusive evidence, that the advocates for Union, such as were the Earl of Clanricarde, and most of the nobility and gentry of Galway, considered, that it would be more effectually carried by *military coercion, than deliberative persuasion.

Personal applications were made by Lord Cornwallis to such members of the Irish parliament, and persons of influence and power in the country, as were considered most open. The amiable qualities of the viceroy, and the promises and prospects of the flattering fruits of Union plausibly made by him, procured a preponderance of interest in favor of the Union from many, who probably would otherwise have opposed it.

Lord Cornwallis uses personal influence to forward the Union.

The predetermination of the British minister to carry the measure, was not to be checked by any Irish opposition. On the 19th of March, Lord Grenville opened the business in the British House of Peers. In the performance of his duty, it afforded him some relief, he said, to find, that the two main points on

The measure brought forward in the British house of lords.

* It appears from a paper presented by Lord Castlereagh on the 11th February, that the regiments then serving in Ireland, and belonging to the British establishment, amounted to 23,201 men. (18 Com. Journ. Appendix, No. XLIX.)

1799.

which the resolutions were founded, had been sufficiently established to preclude the necessity of dwelling upon them. These were, that the legislature of Ireland had an independent right of deciding upon any proposal of Union, as fully as the parliament of Great Britain, and that the interest of the empire at large, and of every branch of it in particular, required the maintenance and improvement of the connexion between the countries. So far from being unseasonable, it was highly expedient and politic to enter upon a speedy inquiry into the merits of the measure. His lordship went into the matter much at large, and amongst other inducements to render the subject desirable to the majority of the Irish people, he held out catholic emancipation as one of the first and most beneficial consequences of the Union. A free admission of the catholics into the Irish parliament might lead to a subversion of its constitution; but all fear of their preponderancy would vanish under a general legislature, as they then would be far outnumbered by the protestants. The animosities of these rival parties would be allayed; and a tranquillity, which Ireland had rarely enjoyed would be the pleasing result. His lordship then moved the first resolution, and intimated, that he should afterwards request the house to vote an address favorable to the adjustment of a complete Union. A long and interesting debate * ensued: the house agreed to

* Which may be seen much at large, *Hist. Rev.* vol. III. p. 923 to 947.

the resolution, and a day was fixed for proposing an address to the throne upon the subject; the introduction of which by Lord Grenville gave rise to another warm debate; in which Lord Minto took a leading part in favor of the Union; and emphatically rested the great benefit of that measure to Ireland upon the assumed emancipation of the Irish catholics. Laws therefore beneficial to the mass of the people of Ireland, and promoting its general prosperity and happiness, were to be expected from the united parliament, in which right might be done unaccompanied by wrong, and Irish catholics invested with their political capacities, without the slightest danger to protestant establishment or property. He advised therefore the insertion of an explicit article in the treaty or act of Union, providing for the just claims of the Catholic Irish; but he was not strenuous or decisive in his recommendation; for he added, that, ‘ if any political peculiarities of the present time should render it impracticable to engross these wholesome provisions in the written treaty itself *, he would rather repress

1799.

* Mr. Pitt to avoid difficulties and delays, resolved not to introduce any stipulation for the catholics, but reserve that measure for the imperial parliament. He sent over therefore to Lord Cornwallis the following communications to be made to some of the catholic body. The paper bespeaks the inducements, under which many of the catholics were allured to support the Union: and its authenticity is verified by a letter from Lord Cornwallis to the author, of the 8th of April, 1805. The verification of this important historical fact is to be seen at large in an historical letter from the author to Sir Richard Musgrave, Bart. p. 72 to 80, 1805. That letter fully exposes the falsehoods, malice, and deception of that Gentleman's writings.

1799. his wishes for the immediate accomplishment of this
 { desirable end, than expose this great transaction to

“ The leading part of his majesty’s ministers finding unsurmountable obstacles to the bringing forward measures of concession to the catholic body, whilst in office, have felt it impossible to continue in administration under the inability to propose it with the circumstances necessary to carrying the measure with all its advantages, and they have retired from his majesty’s service, considering this line of conduct, as most likely to contribute to its ultimate success. The catholic body will, therefore, see how much their future hopes must depend upon strengthening their cause by good conduct in the mean time : they will prudently consider their prospects as arising from the persons, who now espouse their interests, and compare them with those, which they could look to from any other quarter ; they may with confidence rely on the zealous support of all those, who retire, and of many, who remain in office, when it can be given with a prospect of success. They may be assured, that Mr. Pitt will do his utmost to establish their cause in the public favor, and prepare the way for finally attaining their objects : and the catholics will feel, that as Mr. Pitt could not concur in a hopeless attempt to force it now, he must at all times repress with the same decision as if he held an adverse opinion, any unconstitutional conduct in the catholic body.

“ Under these circumstances it cannot be doubted that the catholics will take the most loyal, dutiful, and patient line of conduct, that they will not suffer themselves to be led into measures which can, by any construction, give a handle to the opposers of their wishes, either to misinterpret their principles or to raise an argument for resisting their claims ; but that by their prudent and exemplary demeanour they will afford additional grounds to the growing number of their advocates to enforce their claims on proper occasions, until their objects can be finally and advantageously attained.”

“ The Sentiments of a sincere Friend (i. e. Marquis Cornwallis) to the Catholic Claims.

“ If the catholics should now proceed to violence, or entertain any ideas of gaining their object by convulsive measures, or form-

needless and unprofitable hazard by unseasonable pertinacity or impatience, and would be content to leave it to the mature deliberation and impartial judgment of the imperial legislature.”

1799.

The address being voted, a conference was holden with the commons on the following day; and the deputed lords then proposed, that it should be offered to the throne as the joint address of both houses. Before the commons concurred in the address to the King, they once more brought the plan of Union to a fresh discussion. On the 22d of April, Mr. Pitt moved, that the house should join in the address voted

Conference
with the
Commons.

ing associations with men of Jacobinical principles, they must of course lose the support and aid of those, who have sacrificed their own situations in their cause, but who would at the same time feel it to be their indispensable duty to oppose every thing tending to confusion.

“On the other hand, should the catholics be sensible of the benefit they possess by having so many characters of eminence pledged not to embark in the service of government, except on the terms of the catholic privileges being obtained, it is to be hoped, that on balancing the advantages and disadvantages of their situation they would prefer a quiet and peaceable demeanour to any line of conduct of an opposite description.”

The originals of these two declarations were handed to Dr. Troy, and afterwards to Lord Fingall on the same day by Marquis Cornwallis, in the presence of Lieutenant Colonel Littlehales, in the beginning of May, 1801, shortly before his departure from the government of Ireland, and before the arrival of Lord Hardwicke, his successor. His excellency desired they should be discreetly communicated to the bishops and principal catholics, but not inserted in the newspapers. They appeared, nevertheless, in the English prints soon afterwards, and were copied into the Irish papers.

1799.


by the peers. This brought on a fresh debate. The address* was adopted by the commons; and, on the

* The following was the form of the address.

“ MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

“ WE, your majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in parliament assembled, humbly beg leave to assure your majesty, that we have proceeded with the utmost attention to the consideration of the important subjects recommended to us in your majesty's message respecting the connexion between this country and Ireland.

“ We entertain a firm persuasion that a complete and entire Union between Great Britain and Ireland, founded on equal and liberal principles, on the similarity of laws, constitution, and government, and on a sense of mutual interests and affections, by promoting the security, wealth, and commerce, of the respective kingdoms, and by allaying the distractions, which have unhappily prevailed in Ireland; must afford fresh means of opposing at all times an effectual resistance to the destructive projects of our foreign and domestic enemies, and must tend to confirm and augment the stability, power, and resources of the empire.

“ Impressed with these considerations, we feel it our duty humbly to lay before your Majesty such propositions, as appear to us best calculated to form the basis of such a settlement, leaving it to your Majesty's wisdom, at such time and in such manner as your Majesty, in your parental solicitude for the happiness of your people, shall judge fit, to communicate these propositions to your parliament of Ireland, with whom we shall be at all times ready to concur in all such measures, as may be found most conducive to the accomplishment of this great and salutary work. And we trust, that after full and mature consideration, such a settlement may be framed and established by the deliberative consent of the parliaments of both kingdoms, as may be conformable to the sentiments, wishes, and real interests of your Majesty's faithful subjects of Great Britain and Ireland, and may unite them inseparably in the full enjoyment of the blessings of our free and invaluable constitution, in the support of the honor and dignity of

26th, the sentiments of both houses on the subject were communicated in due form to his majesty. 1799.

Whilst the question of Union was pending in the British senate, that of Ireland continued to occupy itself on other concerns. Long and interesting debates took place upon Mr. Dobbs's motion for a commutation of tithes; upon the loyalists' claim bill, and on the rebel disqualification bill*. Sir H. Langrishe vehemently disapproved of the spirit of the bill, which had been brought in by the members for the city of Dublin. It was warmly supported by Messrs. Ogle, J. C. Beresford, and Dr. Duigenan. The attorney-general considered, that to pass this bill would be to commit a breach of the covenant of pardon made with the country; it would involve in its grasp many innocent and deluded persons, whose return to loyalty was indubitable, but who in the early part of the system of United Irishmen, had entered into it from curiosity or from folly, and had retired the moment they perceived its wickedness. Upon a division the bill was lost.

*Proceedings
of the Irish
Parliament.*

On the 6th of April was presented a petition from T. Judkin Fitzgerald, Esq. late high sheriff of the county of Tipperary, praying to be indemnified for certain acts done by him in suppression of the late

*Motion in
favour of
Mr. Judkin
Fitzgerald.*

your Majesty's crown, and in the preservation and advancement of the welfare and prosperity of the whole British empire." 8 Parl. Eng. Deb. p. 542.

* The title of that bill was for preventing persons, who had ever taken the Oath of the United Irishmen, from voting for Members to serve in Parliament.

1799.

rebellion, not justifiable in common law. The object of it was to do away the effect of the verdict found against the petitioner in an action at the suit of one Wright before mentioned. His prominent zeal in suppressing rebellion, was highly emblazoned by the advocates of the system of coercion. Mr. Yelverton, before whose father the trial came on, and who was himself present at it, gave so lively a picture of the brutal conduct of the petitioner, as proved in evidence at the trial*, that his friends thought prudent

* Mr. Wright was employed as a teacher of the French language by several boarding-schools and families of respectability. Having heard, that Mr. Fitzgerald had received some charges of a seditious nature against him, he went to the house of Mr. Fitzgerald, and being shewn into his presence, explained the purpose of his coming, when Mr. Fitzgerald drawing his sword, said, down on your knees, you rebellious scoundrel, and receive your sentence, which was first to be flogged, and then shot. The unfortunate man surrendered his keys to have his papers searched, and expressed his readiness to suffer any punishment the proof of guilt could justify. Mr. Fitzgerald's answer was, "What, you Carmelite rascal, do you dare to speak after sentence?" He then struck him, and ordered him to prison. The next day being brought forth to undergo his sentence, he knelt down in prayer, with his hat before his face. Mr. Fitzgerald snatched his hat from him and trampled on it, seized the man by the hair, dragged him to the earth, kicked him and cut him across the forehead with his sword, then had him stripped naked, tied up to the ladder, and ordered him fifty lashes. Major Rial, an officer in the town, came up as the fifty lashes were completed, and asked Mr. F. the cause. Mr. Fitzgerald handed him a note written in French, saying, he did not himself understand French, though he understood Irish, but he [Major Rial] would find in that letter what would justify him in flogging the scoundrel to death. Major

to drop the matter. Mr. T. Judkin Fitzgerald afterwards received a considerable pension for his active services in quelling the rebellion.

1799.

Flushed with confidence, the Anti-Unionists were determined to remove every obstacle, that they conceived their opponents might avail themselves of, in bringing the measure to bear. In order therefore to shut out the possibility of any future difference between the parliaments of the two kingdoms in the appointment of a regent, in case that necessity should

Regency
Bill.

Rial read the letter. He found it to be a note for the victim, which he thus translated :

“ SIR,

“ I AM extremely sorry I cannot wait on you at the hour appointed, being unavoidably obliged to attend Sir Laurence Parsons,

Your's,

Baron de CLUES.”

Notwithstanding this translation, Mr. Fitzgerald ordered him fifty more lashes, which were inflicted with such peculiar severity, that the bowels of the bleeding victim could be perceived to be convulsed and working through his wounds ! Mr. Fitzgerald finding he could not continue the application of his cat-o'-nine-tails on that part without cutting his way into his body, ordered the waistband of his breeches to be cut open, and fifty more lashes to be inflicted there. He then left the unfortunate man bleeding and suspended, while he went to the barrack to demand a file of men to come and shoot him ; but being refused by the commanding officer, he came back and sought for a rope to hang him, but could get none. He then ordered him to be cut down and sent back to prison, where he was confined in a dark small room, with no other furniture, than a wretched pallet of straw, without covering, and there he remained six or seven days without medical assistance !

1799.

recur, they brought forward a regency bill to provide for the government of Ireland, whenever that of Great Britain should be administered by a regent or regency; that the regal power of the realm of Ireland should be exercised or administered by the same person or persons, in whom the exercise and administration of the regal powers of the imperial crown of Great Britain should be vested. This bill was frequently and violently debated. The majority did not find it an adequate remedy for the evils of parliamentary variance, and it was postponed to the 1st of August, and thus lost for the session.

General
measures
for and
against
union.

Though ministers had gained an advantage in the rejection of the regency bill, it did not inspire them with sufficient confidence to risk another discussion of the subject, while the public mind was so much on the fret. It was resolved therefore, that the full development of the measure should be deferred to the next session. At this time commenced the singular measure of shifting seats in parliament*, for the open accommodation of those, who wished to vote, and those, who wished to avoid voting on

* An instance occurred on the 15th of May, in which Lord Castlereagh manifested the most barefaced partiality of government in refusing the escheatorship of Munster, which (like our Chiltern Hundreds) vacates the seat of the member accepting, to Colonel Cole, who was ordered to join his corps then in Corfu; but, who being a strong anti-unionist, wished to introduce Mr. Balfour, who entertained the like sentiments; thus compelling Colonel Cole either to resign his commission, or to give the minister the advantage of a vote on this important question.

this important measure. It is matter of notoriety, ^{1799.} that the whole powers of government patronage, influence, and emolument, were devoted to the proselytizing for Union. An accommodating casuistry reconciled some of the political combatants to quit the field for a valuable consideration, in order to let in others to fight the battle they were ashamed to engage in: thus squeamishly refusing the wages of prostitution, whilst they enhanced their demands for procuration.

When the parliament was prorogued on the 1st of June, the commons attended their speaker to the House of Lords, where his excellency delivered a speech * from the throne, which contained the following special communication from his majesty, that a joint address of the two houses of parliament of Great Britain had been laid before his majesty, accompanied by resolutions proposing and recommending a complete and entire union between Great Britain and Ireland, to be established by the mutual consent of both parliaments, founded on equal and liberal principles, on the similarity of laws, constitution, and government, and on a sense of mutual interest and affections. The session of the British parliament closed on the 12th of July, when his majesty assured them that the ultimate security of Ireland could alone be established by its *intimate and entire union with Great Britain*†.

Prorogation of parliament, and the lord-lieutenant's speech.

Ireland was now neither convulsed with rebellion, nor perfectly tranquil. Several counties were pro-

Internal state of Ireland.

* 19 Com. Journ. p. 145.

† 9 Eng. Deb. p. 579.

1799. claimed. The presence of numerous troops kept the malecontents in awe; the extraordinary powers of courts-martial diffused through the realm effective terror. Insults, outrages, and depredations, were not infrequent. The question of union fanned the old or raised a new flame of discord. On both sides artifices were practised to obtain signatures to addresses for and against the measure. The influence of government was forwarded by the presence of the lord-lieutenant, in a tour he made through many counties with that view. In the meanwhile the legislature of Great Britain re-assembled on the 24th of September, when his Majesty expressed his confidence, that the disposition of the parliament of Ireland would be found to correspond with that, which the national council of Britain had manifested for the accomplishment of an union. The Marquis of Buckingham moved the address of thanks, and enforced the expediency of the measure from his experimental knowledge of Ireland.

Efforts to
oppose the
union.

In January, 1800, the Marquis of Downshire, Lord Charlemont, and William Brabazon Ponsonby sent circular letters to the gentry and yeomanry, (as authorised by a number of gentlemen of both houses of parliament, thirty-eight of whom were representatives of counties) to recommend petitions to parliament against a legislative union. It was falsely given out that the anti-unionists had formed a stock-purse * for

* The conduct of the Marquis of Downshire was so displeasing to government, that he was removed from the government of the

defraying the expenses of opposing the measure. At a meeting of some of the heads of the party in Dublin, Lord Dillon made such a proposal, but it was not followed up. 1800.

The conduct of Lord Cornwallis was politically kind and liberal towards the Catholics, in order to engage them in favour of the union. No description of persons had such strong reasons for opposing that measure as the body of Roman Catholics, who by it forfeited all the constitutional advantages of a decided majority of an independent nation, to sink into an insignificant minority of the united kingdom. At Dublin a large portion of the Catholic residents came forward in their distinct capacity of Catholics, to oppose it, and on the 12th of January, held a numerous meeting, at which they passed and published some resolutions against union*. How the Catholics acted as to the union. In other parts of the kingdom Catholic individuals had signed addresses and resolutions promiscuously with their Protestant brethren against the measure. This step was productive of some disunion in the Catholic body; as the clergy and several respectable Catholic inhabitants of the city of Dublin warmly supported the lord-lieutenant in the measure. The Orangemen more wary, in order not to weaken their body by disunion, published an

county, from the colonelcy of the royal Downshire regiment of 1200 men, and erased from the list of privy counsellors. In open parliament he disclaimed the charge of any contribution.

* The resolutions of the Catholics against union, and of the Grand Orange Lodge, to abstain from discussing the question, are to be seen Hist. Rev. vol. III. 933, &c.

1800. advertisement from their grand lodge to prevent even the discussion of the question amongst them.

Effects of
the prepa-
ratory steps
for union.

The lord-lieutenant was satisfied with the success of his summer excursion through the kingdom. The great horror of the measure had abated in many places; in some the original opposers had now become warm advocates in its favour. It had not become generally popular, although it had ceased to be generally unpopular. Preparations were made on both sides for the parliamentary contest on the 15th of January, on which day Mr. Grattan had been elected for the borough of Wicklow, on the death of Mr. Gahan deceased, and was sworn in. The lord-lieutenant made a long speech from the throne, which avoided any mention of or reference to the union *. After the address had been moved and seconded, Sir Lawrence Parsons inveighed warmly against the ministerial manœuvres to pack a parliament, and influence its members. It mattered not whether the representatives of the nation were turned out of that door by the sword of the army, or the gold of the treasury; by a Cromwell or by a secretary; the treason against the constitution was the same. He then moved an amendment to the address, connecting the desire of a continuance of British connexion with the wish for the preservation of an independent resident parliament. This brought on a most interesting debate†. On the division, (at

* It may be seen, *Hist. Rev.* vol. III. p. 984.

† Mr. Grattan entered the house between Mr. William B. Ponsonby and Mr. Arthur Moore, whilst Mr. Egan was on his legs

ten o'clock in the morning) 96 voted for the amendment, 138 against it. This majority of 42 exceeded the warmest expectations of government. The viceroy hoped to increase it by allowing an interval of some weeks to pass, before he sent to either house a copy of the resolutions of the parliament of Great Britain.

1800.

A majority of 42 flushed government with confidence, and drove the Anti-unionists almost to desperation. The members were now so immoveably marshalled, that further changes were not looked to by either side. Some solitary instances of conversion did appear. In order to counteract the first effects of this ministerial triumph in the capital, within an hour or two after the adjournment of the house of commons (at ten o'clock, on the 16th of January) an aggregate meeting of the freemen and freeholders of the city of Dublin was convened by instant requi-

Consequences of the minister's majority.

actually referring to the constitution of 1792. The re-appearance in parliament of the founder of that constitution at that critical moment and under those awful circumstances, electrified the house and galleries with an indescribable emotion of terrific joy and expectation. On rising to speak, he referred to the adjustment of 1782. The minister of Great Britain, he said, had come forward in two celebrated productions; he declared his intolerance of the parliamentary constitution of Ireland; that constitution, which he ordered the several viceroys to celebrate, in defence of which he recommended the French war, and to which he swore the yeoman; that constitution he now declared to be a miserable imperfection, concurring with the men, whom he had executed for thinking the Irish parliament a grievance; differing from them in the remedy only: they proposing to substitute a republic, and he the yoke of the British parliament. This great and good patriot rallied all the powers of his youth, and in a long speech outstepped his usual brilliancy.

1800. sition, at which they passed very strong resolutions *
against Union.

Meeting of
parliament
after ad-
journment.

At the meeting of parliament after the adjournment, on the 15th of February, 1800, petitions against a legislative Union with Great Britain were received from the counties of Dublin, Limerick, Wexford, Cavan, Longford, Tipperary, Galway, Meath, and Fermanagh; also from the city of Limerick, the town of Belfast, and several others. On the introduction of the Tipperary petition, Sir L. Parsons took occasion of stating to the house, that Major Rogers, who commanded at Birr, having been told, that there was an intention of assembling the freeholders and inhabitants to deliberate on the propriety of petitioning against a legislative Union, the major replied he would disperse them by force if they attempted it; he had applied to government for directions. And on Sunday, whilst several magistrates and respectable inhabitants were assembled in the session-house, the high-sheriff (Mr. Derby) ordered them to disperse, or he would compel them; they

* The proceedings of that meeting shew the spirit of the day, and are to be seen, Hist. Rev. vol. III. p. 999. Amongst these resolutions there was a most enthusiastic panegyric on the talents, virtue, and patriotism of Mr. Grattan, their late member. The quick shiftings of the *popularis aura* should not here pass unnoticed. The ingratitude and calumnies of Mr. Grattan's late constituents had weighed not lightly in the scale, which turned that gentleman's resolution to retire from parliament. They now placed him at the head of the triumvirate of their (*interested*) affections and adoration, with Messrs. Foster and Ogle, who had been unceasing objects of Mr. Grattan's opposition during the whole course of his political career in parliament.

1800.

were about to depart, when Major Rogers appeared at the head of a column of troops, with four pieces of cannon in front, with matches lighted, and declared that he waited but for one word from the sheriff, that he might blow them to atoms! These were the dreadful measures, Sir Laurence said, by which government endeavoured to force the Union upon the people of Ireland, by stifling their sentiments and dragooning them into submission. He then proposed two resolutions to the house of the following effect: 1st. "That to prevent by military force the freeholders of any county from meeting to petition parliament, is a gross violation of the privileges of this house, and a subversion of the constitution. 2d. That Verney Derby, Esq. and Major Rogers do attend at the bar of the house on Wednesday next." Lord Castlereagh said, that he had never before, either in his official or parliamentary capacity, heard a syllable of the matter then stated to the house. As an acknowledged truism, Sir Laurence Parsons withdrew his first resolution, and the second passed unanimously. Nothing however appears to have been done upon it.

Lord Castlereagh acquainted the house, that he had a * message from his excellency the lord-lieutenant,

Message
from the
lord-lieutenant
about
Union.

* "CORNWALLIS,

"At the close of the last session, in obedience to the particular commands, which I received from his Majesty, I acquainted this parliament, that a joint address of the two houses of parliament of Great Britain had been laid before his Majesty, accompanied by resolutions proposing the recommending a complete and entire Union between Great Britain and Ireland, to be established by the mutual consent of both parliaments, founded on

1800. which he read; and then proceeded to lay open the plan of the Union, which he now looked up to as a certainty: he spoke with peculiar confidence of the change of sentiment, which had taken place in the minds of many, who were last year hostile to the measure. He concluded a detailed exposition of the plan nearly in the following words: "Having now gone through the outline of the plan with as much conciseness as possible, I trust I have proved to every

equal and liberal principles, on the similarity of constitution and government, and on a sense of mutual interests and affections.

"I have it now further in command from his Majesty to lay those resolutions before this house, and solemnly to recommend to the consideration of his faithful commons the great objects they embrace.

"His Majesty has observed with increasing satisfaction, that the sentiments which have continued to be manifested in favor of this important and salutary measure by such numerous and respectable descriptions of his Irish subjects, confirm the hope he has expressed, that its accomplishment will prove to be as much the joint wish as it unquestionably is the common interest of both his kingdoms: an event to which his Majesty looks forward with the utmost earnestness, as the only means, by which the common interests of all his people can be indissolubly united, and their security and happiness can be permanently established.

"His Majesty therefore relies on the wisdom of his parliaments, and the loyal concurrence of his people for the completion of this great work, with a firm persuasion that a full and unreserved participation of constitutional and commercial advantages will augment and perpetuate the prosperity of his subjects of his united kingdom, and that under the favour of Divine Providence the freedom and power of the British empire will be established on a foundation not to be shaken by the efforts either of its foreign or domestic enemies."

1800.

man, who hears me, that the proposal is such a one, as is at once honourable for Great Britain to offer, and for Ireland to accept. It is one, which will entirely remove from the executive power those anomalies, which are the perpetual sources of jealousy and discontent. It is one, which will relieve the apprehensions of those, who feared that Ireland was, in consequence of an Union, to be burthened with the debt of Britain. It is one, which, by establishing a fair principle of contribution, tends to release Ireland from an expense of one million in time of war, and of 500,000*l.* in time of peace. It is one, which increases the resources of our commerce, protects our manufactures, secures to us the British market, and encourages all the produce of our soil. It is one, that, by uniting the ecclesiastical establishments, and consolidating the legislatures of the empire, puts an end to religious jealousy, and removes the possibility of separation. It is one, that places the great question, which has so long agitated the country, upon the broad principles of imperial policy, and divests it of all its local difficulties. It is one, that establishes such a representation for the country, as must lay asleep for ever the question of parliamentary reform, which, combined with our religious divisions, has produced all our distractions and calamities." The house divided, at a very late hour, 158 for, and 115 against the measure of Union *.

* When the number of the placemen, pensioners, and other influenced members, who voted on the late division is considered, the

1800.

The plan
carried in
the peers.

On the 10th of February Lord Clare brought on the matter on the order of the day for taking his Majesty's message into consideration. His lordship * had frequently and publickly pledged himself to carry it through, and he effected it. He concluded his elaborate and animated speech with the following observation: "that if he lived to see that measure completed, to his latest hour he should feel an honorable pride in reflecting on the share he might have had in contributing to effect it †." The majority of

minister had but slender grounds for triumphing in his majority of 43, if from it were to be collected the genuine sense of the independent part of that house and of the people of Ireland, whom they represented. So predetermined however was the British cabinet to force the measure upon Ireland in that favorable opportunity of her weakness and fears, that lavish recourse was had to the powers of patronage and influence. Many, it is to be feared, in both houses sacrificed their convictions. Twenty-seven new titles were added to the peerage; promotions, grants, concessions, arrangements, promises were lavished with a profusion never before known in that country. Pity for both sides, that so great and important a political measure should owe any part of its success, to other than the means of temperate reason and persuasion.

* Having heretofore referred to parts of this noble lord's speech delivered on that occasion, and also to Mr. Grattan's written answer to it, we recommend them both as valuable repertories of true and interesting representations of facts and characters peculiarly important to the modern history of Ireland.

† Notwithstanding this declaration, it is reported, that this noble lord felt so sensibly, after the Union, the loss of his own power and consequence, of which he was inordinately fond, that it preyed upon his spirits, and contributed to hasten his dissolution. He avowed in his last illness, that of all the political actions of his life he most repented of his exertions to bring about the Union.

1800.



49 (the numbers being 75 against 26) in the lords shewed, that the British cabinet had more strength in the lords than the commons. The further consideration of the measure was postponed by the lords to the 14th, and by the commons to the 17th of March.

On the 17th of March, the chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Corry, opened the subject by retracing his old ground of argument, which he interspersed with much personal acrimony and abuse, directed particularly at Mr. Grattan, who vindicated himself in strong language, and retorted upon his opponent the insinuations of unconstitutional and treasonable conduct. Mr. Corry replied with redoubled severity; and Mr. Grattan rejoined with such increased power of censure, as threw the *onus* of resentment completely on Mr. Corry *. After a long debate, a mo-

Debated in
the com-
mons.

His ambition aspired to rule the British councils, as he had so long directed those of Ireland. There he failed.

* The house saw the inevitable consequences. The speaker (the house was in committee) sent for Mr. Grattan into his chamber, and pressed his interposition for an amicable adjustment, which Mr. Grattan positively refused, saying, he saw, and had been some time aware of a set made at him, to *pistol him off* on that question; therefore it was as well the experiment were tried then as at any other time. Both parties had instantly left the house upon Mr. Grattan's finishing his speech. Matters having been speedily adjusted by the seconds, they proceeded in hackney coaches to a field on the Ball's Bridge road, which they reached about twilight. It was agreed, that they should level and fire at their own option. The first shot on both sides did no mischief; Mr. Grattan's passed through Mr. Corry's coat. On the second level there was much science and pistol play. Mr. Grattan, with unshaken steadiness, kept his man accurately covered, and

1800.



tion was made for adjournment, which being rejected, the first day of the following January was fixed for the commencement of the Union of the kingdoms. Various objections were ineffectually taken by some of the Anti-unionists to the different provisions of the bill, as they were discussed in the committee. Sir John Parnell moved for an address to the King to convoke a new parliament before any final arrangement of Union should be adopted. This motion produced a warm debate, which ended at four o'clock in the morning, in a division of 104 for the motion.

Irish Parliament assents to the articles of Union.

A message was sent to the House of Lords, importing, that the commons had agreed to the articles *

reserved his shot to make it more secure, which Mr. Corry perceiving, called to his second, and it was settled upon the honour of the parties, that both should fire together. Mr. Corry missed his aim, and Mr. Grattan's ball hit his antagonist on the knuckle of his left hand, which he had extended across his breast to protect his right side, and taking a direction along his wrist, did no other injury.

The populace, notwithstanding the quickness and secrecy, with which the business was conducted, followed the parties to the ground, and there was reason to fear, had Mr. Grattan fallen, that his antagonist would have been sacrificed on the spot to the resentment of the populace, so enthusiastically were they devoted to their favourite. The issue of this affair reached the House of Commons, whilst they were still in debate at half-past eight in the morning. Before Mr. Grattan went to the ground, a most affecting and truly Roman meeting took place between him and Mrs. Grattan. That gentleman was as eminent for the endearments of domestic felicity, as he was conspicuous for his exertions in the cause of the people.

* These articles are to be seen in the Appendix to Historical Review, No. CXIX.

of the Union; and on the 27th, the peers intimated to the other house, that they had adopted them with some alterations and additions. The amendments were approved of by the commons; and Lord Castle-reagh immediately proposed an address to his Majesty, in which both houses concurred. In this address they declared, that they cordially embraced the principle of incorporating Great Britain and Ireland into one kingdom, by a complete and entire Union of their legislatures; that they considered the resolutions of the British parliament as wisely calculated to form the basis of such a settlement; that by those propositions they had been guided in their proceedings; and that the resolutions now offered were those articles, which if approved by the lords and commons of Great Britain, they were ready to confirm and ratify, in order, that the same might be established for ever by the mutual consent of both parliaments. The plan of the Union was thus left to the final consideration of the British legislature.

The articles of Union passed through the Irish parliament, as they had been originally framed by the British ministry, and were brought forward in the House of Lords, as terms proposed by the lords and commons of Ireland, in the form of resolutions on the 2d day of April, 1800, by the Duke of Portland, with a message from the King. The articles went through a long and minute discussion in both houses. The opposition to them was firm, but proceeded from few. A joint address from both houses was presented to his Majesty. The plan was then transmitted to Ireland;

1800.

Articles of
Union
brought be-
fore the
British par-
liament.

1800.

and each parliament proceeded to carry into effect the articles by a bill. Although the Anti-unionists had been so constantly baffled, they persisted in disputing every inch of the ground. As a separate bill was thought necessary for regulating the election of the representatives of Ireland in the imperial parliament, Lord Castlereagh moved for leave to introduce it before the general bill of Union. Amongst others this singular objection was raised by the Anti-unionists to the measure: that as the clergy was only shut out of their right to agistment tithe by a vote of the Irish House of Commons, from the moment of the abolition of that house, which passed the vote, there would be an end to any authority, which could preserve the grazing land of the kingdom from the common law right of the clergy to their agistment tithe. That thenceforth the Irish clergy would be in a situation of demanding and enforcing their agistment tithe in Ireland, as effectually as the English clergy could in England. Lord Castlereagh greedily obviated the objection by sacrificing the rights of the church to the policy of the British ministers in carrying the Union. An act was instantly passed * by acclamation to counteract in this particular the 18th article of the Union then approved of by the houses of each legislature; viz. that the churches of Great Britain and Ireland should be united, *subject to the same regulations as are at present by law established.* After the several arti-

* On the 12th of June, 1800, was passed an act to quiet and bar all claims of tithe agistment for dry and barren cattle. Vid. *ibid.* p. 108, &c.

cles had been adjusted and agreed to by each house, the resolutions were formed into a bill, and the motion for bringing in a bill for the Union of Great Britain and Ireland was carried by 160 against 100. When it was in the committee, Lord Corry moved a long address to his Majesty against the completion of the bill *, which after a heated debate was negatived by a majority of 58. The bill was carried up to the House of Peers by Lord Castlereagh, where it was read a third time on the 13th of June †. A protest was entered by the Duke of Leinster and the other dissenting peers.

1800.

No part of the plan now remained for the secretary to bring forward, but the scheme of compensation. This he plausibly ushered in upon a principle of justice ; he proposed a grant of 1,260,000*l.* for those, who should suffer a loss of patronage, and be deprived of a source of wealth, by the disfranchisement of 84 boroughs at the rate of 15,000*l.* for each. Mr. Saurin, Mr. J. Claudius Beresford, and Mr. Dawson maintained, that the grant of compensation to those, who had no right to hold such species of property, would be an insult to the public and an infringement of the constitution. Mr. Prendergast defended the proposition, alleging, that, though such

Compensation for Rough property.

* This address, which is generally attributed to the pen of Mr. Grattan, and was moved for by the Anti-unionists as their solemn protest to posterity against the measure, is to be seen in the Appendix to Hist. Rev. No. CXX. and is highly interesting.

† 8 Lords' Journ. p. 463. The division was 41 against 14. The protest is to be seen in the Appendix, to Hist. Rev. No. CXXI.

1800.



possessions might have been vicious in their origin, yet, from prescriptive usage, and from having been the subjects of contracts and family settlements, they could not be confiscated, without a breach of honor and propriety. In the House of Peers this bill was chiefly opposed by the Earl of Farnham; but it passed into law with little opposition in either house; the Anti-unionists having now given up the question as lost*.

Union bill
passed in
the British
parliament.

Soon after the Union bill had passed through both houses of the Irish parliament, Mr. Pitt brought a bill in the same form into the British House of Commons. It proceeded through the usual stages, without occasioning any important debate; and was sent, on the 24th of June, to the peers. On the 30th, Lord Grenville moved for its third reading, declaring, that he rose for that purpose with greater pleasure, than he had ever before felt in making any proposition to their lordships. The Marquis of Downshire merely said, that his opinion of the measure remained unaltered, and that he would therefore give the bill his decided negative. It passed without a

* As so much heat and zeal attended this interesting contest throughout, it may be gratifying to the curious reader to see the list of those, who voted on the opposite sides. A correct list is also given of the different writs, which issued in the last year of the Irish parliament, viz. in 1800, with a view to parliamentary arrangements in voting for the Union (Vide Index to the Appendix of Vol. XIX. of Com. Journ. Part II. and also a list of the Irish Parliamentary Annuitants.) All are to be seen in the Appendix to Hist. Rev. No. CXXII. together with ample details of the different debates on the question of Union.

1800.


division; and, on the 2d of July, it received the royal assent, when his Majesty thus addressed the two houses. "With peculiar satisfaction I congratulate you on the success of the steps, which you have taken for effecting an entire Union between my kingdoms. This great measure, on which my wishes have been long earnestly bent, I shall ever consider as the happiest event of my reign." The royal assent was given in Ireland to the Union bill on the 1st of August, the anniversary of the accession of the House of Brunswick to the thrones of these realms. The next day, the lord-lieutenant put an end to the session with an appropriate speech from the throne *.

* "My Lords and Gentlemen,

"THE whole business of this important session being at length happily concluded, it is with the most sincere satisfaction, that I communicate to you by his Majesty's express command, his warmest acknowledgments for that ardent zeal and unshaken perseverance, which you have so conspicuously manifested in maturing and completing the great measure of a legislative Union between this kingdom and Great Britain.

"The proofs you have given on this occasion of your uniform attachment to the real welfare of your country, inseparably connected with the security and prosperity of the empire at large, not only entitle you to the full approbation of your sovereign, and to the applause of your fellow-subjects, but must afford you the surest claim to the gratitude of posterity.

"You will regret with his Majesty, the reverse, which his Majesty's allies have experienced on the Continent; but his Majesty is persuaded, that the firmness and public spirit of his subjects will enable him to persevere in that line of conduct, which will best provide for the honor, and the essential interests of his dominions,

1800.

Selection of
the Union
members.

The example of the Scotch Union was followed by Ireland in the formation of their first quota of the imperial parliament. No new election was resorted to, but the most zealous supporters of the measure were generally rewarded with seats in the imperial legislature*. In consequence of the proclamations issued in Great Britain and Ireland for the purpose, a selection was made of the persons to represent the boroughs of Ireland in the imperial parliament. At ten o'clock in the morning, the deputy clerk of the crown and hanaper and several members attended in the place of meeting of the House of Commons, where the names of such members, as were to be ballotted were written

whose means and resources have now by your wisdom been more closely and intimately combined.

“ Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ I AM to thank you in his Majesty's name, for the liberal supplies, which you have cheerfully granted for the various and important branches of the public service in the present year.

“ His Majesty has also witnessed with pleasure that wise liberality, which will enable him to make a just and equitable retribution to those bodies and individuals, whose privileges and interests are affected by the Union, and he has also seen with satisfaction that attention to the internal prosperity of this country, which has been so conspicuously testified by the encouragement you have given to the improvement and extension of its inland navigation.”

* Not one of the 28 peers, who opposed the Union, was elected. Amongst the 100 commoners, some few of the Anti-unionists appear; such as Mr. Foster, Sir John Parnell, Mr. Ogle, Sir Lawrence Parsons, Mr. W. B. Ponsonby, Mr. J. C. Beresford, Lord Corry, &c.

upon slips of paper, and drawn from a glass placed upon the table. 1800.

On the 31st of December, 1800, his Majesty entered the House of Peers, when the usher of the black rod was sent to desire the attendance of the commons. Several members of the House of Commons appeared at the bar, preceded by the speaker, who addressed his Majesty in a dignified and impressive speech. That part of it, which related to Ireland was as follows :
“ These, Sire, the last proceedings of your parliament previous to the great era now on the point of commencing, are the indication and result of that common interest and fellow-feeling with the people, by which it has ever been actuated, and which are the best safeguard of all that is most valuable in society. To that era your commons look forward with a confident expectation, that the consolidated wisdom and authority of the legislature of Great Britain and Ireland, under the auspicious government of your Majesty, and your illustrious house, will diffuse throughout every part of the united kingdom the full benefits of that constitution, which has been proved to be favorable, in an unexampled degree, to the enjoyment of civil liberty and public prosperity ; which cannot therefore fail to animate the zeal and determination of those, who may share its blessings, to cherish and maintain it during their own times, and to transmit it as the best inheritance to their posterity.”
His Majesty was then pleased to make a most gracious speech from the throne to both houses of parliament : afterwards the lord-chancellor, by his Majesty’s com-

Completion
of the
Union.

1800.

mand, prorogued the parliament to the 22d day of January, 1801, when the members were summoned by a proclamation read by the clerk at the table, to attend in their places. Immediately after his Majesty had left the house, he held a grand council, in which several arrangements required by that grand event were settled. In honor of the Union many promotions were made, and several new titles created. On the next day, viz. the first of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, the incorporate Union of Great Britain and Ireland was formally announced by proclamation. * Thus was accomplished the incorporate Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

* On the same day was published another proclamation, declaring what ensigns and colours should be borne at sea, in merchant ships or vessels belonging to his Majesty's subjects of the united kingdom, for which see Appendix, No. CXXIV. His Majesty's speech and the several proclamations here referred to are to be seen, *Hist. Rev.* vol. III. 1071 to 1076.

THE END.

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| 23 | 17 | for <i>presumptive</i> read <i>presumptuous</i> . |
| 18 | 18 | (<i>et alibi in eodem sensu</i>) for <i>antiquarian</i> read <i>antiquary</i> . |
| 291 | 2 | for <i>suffrages</i> read <i>suffragans</i> . |
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